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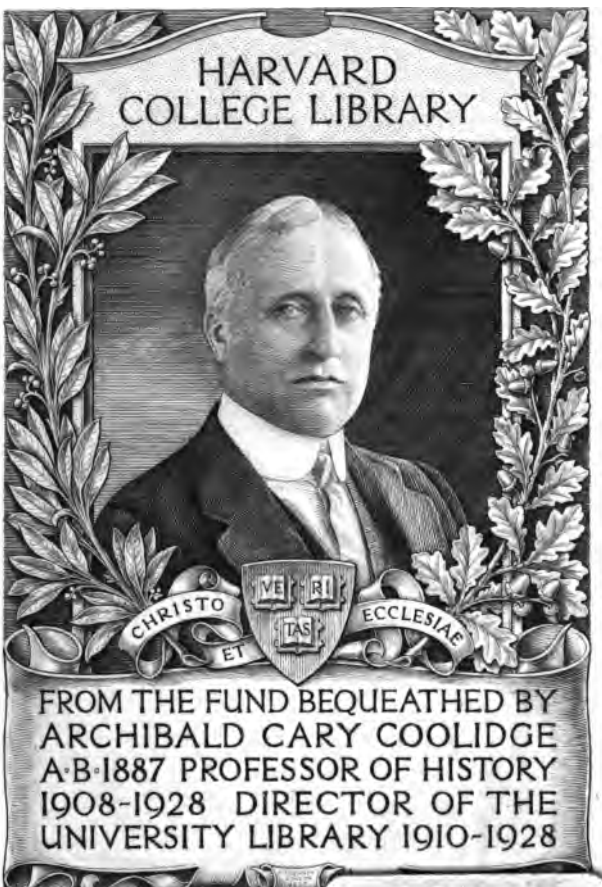

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WILLIAM GRIMSHAW,

INCUMBENT OF HAWORTH.

1742—63.

BY R. SPENCE HARDY,

Hon. M. R. A. S.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN MASON, CITY-ROAD;

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PREFACE.

In 1852, and the two following years, the Author resided at Keighley, and had frequently to visit Haworth in the discharge of his duty as a Wesleyan minister. He then formed the resolution to write a Life of Grimshaw, and began to collect materials for the purpose; but want of leisure has prevented until now the completion of the work.

At first he included in his plan notices of Venn, Darney, Nelson, Lee, and the other devoted men who were associated with Grimshaw; but he found, as he proceeded, that he must either omit the mention of many interesting incidents connected with their labours, or extend his volume to an inconvenient size. He has, therefore, in the present work, made no reference to these worthies, beyond what was necessary to illustrate the character of Grimshaw; but, should time and opportunity be given, he may publish at some future period a companion volume, on Grimshaw's Round and its Preachers.

3, *Chester-Place, Lambeth,*
March 31, 1860.

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WILLIAM GRIMSHAW.

CHAPTER I.

HOGHTON TOWER.—BRINDLE.—LAY LIFE.—ORDINATION.—ROCHDALE.—TODMORDEN.—MARRIAGE.—BEREAVEMENTS.—FORM OF BURIAL.

Among the noble old mansions that stud the realm of England, there are few that command a larger or more lordly prospect than Hoghton Tower, in the county-palatine of Lancaster. In the year 1617 it was the scene of a famous revelry, when King James, attended by his courtiers, in one of his royal progresses, was here entertained, for the space of three days, by Sir Richard Hoghton. In a merry mood, if tradition speaks truth, the savoury loin of which he partook was then knighted; and in the sirloin of our own day its honours still survive, though the house of the king who gave them has passed away for ever. Another deed was done at the same high festival, which may have had some connexion with this overthrow; and had the consequences of the course he was taking been then revealed to the

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monarch by some gifted seer, they would have been more startling to him than was the discovery, in a former year, of the plot of Guy Fawkes and his merciless accomplices. A great company of peasants and handicraftsmen gathered together upon the hill, that they might present to James a petition, in which they requested that the men of Lancashire might not be further hindered "from their usual diversions on Sundays and other holydays," but be permitted to hold "all lawful sports, so that the same should not impediment or cause neglect of Divine service." The king gave a favourable answer to their request, a proclamation to the same purpose was soon afterwards issued, and this was succeeded by the publication of the "Book of Sports;" but the indignation of the more religious portion of the community was thereby roused, and there followed, by rapid steps, the civil war and all its consequences, in their limitless importance.

On the south-western slope of the same elevation, surrounded by smaller hills, which shelter it from the winds that have here the first obstruction they meet with after their sweep over the sea, lies the village of Brindle, in which WILLIAM GRIMSHAW was born, on the 3d of September, 1708. It is in a central position, between the manufacturing towns of Preston, Blackburn, and Chorley, and the highway from Blackburn to Ormskirk runs through it; but the grass grows in its streets, and it has all the stillness and

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seclusion of a hamlet in some district entirely agricultural. The wild boar and the white bull once roamed here, and the red deer browsed among the trees; but every part of the upland is now under cultivation. There is no one of the name of Grimshaw now resident in the parish, and the only memorial of the family we could discover, on a visit of observation, was from the bluff old "sax-stone," (as the maid of the inn designated him,) who told us that under a slab in the church-yard—its superscription now so much defaced as to be illegible—there lies the body of a noted Methodist preacher of that name. This statement cannot be correct; but we shall be safe in the inference that the grave in question is the resting-place of the Grimshaws. The present church is a modern building, without any kind of ornament in its construction. Upon the churchwardens' pew are the initials "W. G., R. C., 1698;" and deeply cut in the stone near the communion-rail are the letters "W. G.;" but we have no certainty that they refer to the Grimshaws, as the manor and advowson of the church were formerly in the possession of the Gerrards, and William Gerrard was rector of the parish from 1567 to 1575. The baptismal registers were readily shown to us; but as those from 1693 to 1713 are missing, said to have been taken away by one of the former rectors, there is no record of William's birth. One of the churchwardens in 1728 was called William Grimshaw. This was

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probably the father of the incumbent of Haworth, as we are told he was of the same name.

Of the boyhood of William we have little further account than that he was educated at the Grammar Schools of Blackburn and Heskin, both in the immediate neighbourhood of Brindle. In his early days he had serious thoughts of death and judgment, the sufferings of Christ, the glories of heaven, and the torments of hell. Referring, in later life, to his own experience at this period, he says, "I think it concerns all people to take notice that the Holy Ghost begins with us in our infancy, to draw us by His convictive influences towards conversion. This I can bear witness to, and am persuaded that if any man will but carefully recollect himself, he can date, as far back as his infancy, the remembrance of many sharp rebukes and upbraidings, checks and terrors of conscience, for having done amiss. He can very well remember several awful and heart-affecting thoughts about a God, and judgment, death, and eternity, &c., in these tender years." From the Tower of the Hoghtons the influence may have come that thus impressed his mind. The celebrated sermon of John Howe, entitled "The Redeemer's Dominion over the Invisible World, and the Entrance thereinto by Death," was preached in 1699, on occasion of the death of John Hoghton, Esq., the eldest son of Sir Charles and Lady Mary Hoghton, in which he speaks of the religious influence exercised upon the neigh-

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bourhood by this ancient family. Sir Charles died in 1710; but the younger brother of John, after his decease "the hope of his family and resort of his country," is spoken of by Howe as presenting a similar character.

In his eighteenth year, Grimshaw was admitted of Christ's College, Cambridge. He proceeded to the degree of Bachelor of Arts; but whether his reception of higher honours was prevented by his leaving college, or by inattention to study, we are not able now to learn. For the first two years he was sober and diligent; after which the good impressions of his earlier youth were erased from his heart, through the influence of thoughtless companions. His religious experience had hitherto been fitful; like the day of storm, when the bright sunlight bursts at intervals from between broad black clouds; but it soon gave way to continued gloom and unbroken night. It was to prepare himself for the work of the ministry that he matriculated; but, like too many young men in the same position, he had no right appreciation of the tremendous responsibilities he was about to undertake. The example presented by his fellow-students tended still further to alienate him from the fear of God, as he associated with those who were regardless of restraint. It is said that he now made "a proficiency in wickedness," and that, "falling into bad company, he learned to drink and swear." But on his return home, lest his friends should be led to

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conclude, if they saw his real character, that their money had been spent to little purpose, he outwardly reformed, and left off the grosser sins to which he had become addicted.

In the year 1731 he was ordained Deacon; and the solemn thoughts of his childhood again returned, in their original force, when he was called upon to declare, "in the presence of the people," that he regarded himself as "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon himself this office and ministration." When afterwards more powerfully wrought upon by the Spirit of God, he lamented that his object in seeking ordination had been so unworthy, confessing that it was only "to get a good living."

It was at Rochdale, in his native county, but on the borders of Yorkshire, that he first entered upon the work of the ministry. There had been a previous connexion between his native village and this place, which may have led to the appointment he now received. The parsonage at Brindle was erected, says Dr. Kuerden, "by the worthy and learned parson, Mr. Henry Pygot, vicar of Ratchdale, a doubly qualified Peter both for souls and fishes, and a complacent associate to the gentry and all learned persons." He died in 1722, aged ninety-four, after having been rector of Brindle seventy-one years. For a short period after his ordination, there was a change in Grimshaw's

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manner of life. He associated with a number of persons who met together weekly, to read, sing psalms, and pray. They may have been a remnant of the church that Oliver Heywood found here when he visited Rochdale in 1672. "I can well remember," he says, "that when at my father's house they had a private fast, when I was a child, they set me a singing about the door, that when the apparitor came he might not hear them pray." This was at Little Lever, in the same locality, just before the commencement of the civil war; and it was not unusual for the prayer-meetings to continue during the whole of the night.

The residence of Grimshaw at Rochdale can only have been of short duration, as on the 17th of September, in the same year, 1731, he was appointed to the curacy of Todmorden, to which place he then removed. As he remained in this locality eleven years, frequently visited it after his removal to Haworth, remained connected with it until his death, and was led by the peculiar circumstances of its population to adopt those plans of usefulness, and continue those earnest labours, that form the most prominent features of his history; it will not be possible rightly to understand his character, unless we review, at somewhat greater length, the social position of the people among whom he was now called upon to live.

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The chapelry of Todmorden is in the parish of Rochdale; but a considerable part of the town is in the parish of Halifax, one of the largest in the kingdom. It was formerly on the borders of the Saxon parish of Dewsbury, the area of which has been estimated at four hundred miles, and within the ancient parish of Whalley, which was also of immense extent. Stretching away to the eastward was the forest of Hardwick, the wild and lawless character of which may be learnt from the fact of its having had a separate jurisdiction, by which its frith-burghers could sentence the convicted felon to immediate execution, for offences that would now be followed by only a few days' imprisonment, or a small fine. In the twenty-seven years previous to the removal of Oliver Heywood to Coley, in 1650, seventeen persons were thus beheaded, of whom four were women. The criminal was decapitated at a gibbet, resembling in form the guillotine of the Continent. The frequency with which human blood was seen to drip on the gibbet-hill would tend to brutalize the people whose propensity to crime it was intended to check. Yet one of the earliest Protestant vicars of Halifax, after describing the country as sterile and unfruitful, adds,

"*Sed bona gens, populus sanctus, pietatis et ardens.*"

A writer in the reign of Elizabeth confirms the character given by the vicar, but makes his

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statement somewhat doubtful by this addition: "Only the ancient custom of beheading such as are apprehended for theft, without trial after the course of law, they are driven by the same need and necessity to continue, that enforced them to take it up at first, otherwise their trade in that place would not have been." The testimony of James Rither is less favourable: "They have no superior to court, no civilities to practise; a sour and sturdy humour is the consequence; so that a stranger is shocked by a tone of defiance in every voice, and an air of fierceness in every countenance." Long afterwards, Dr. Thomas Dunham Whitaker, vicar of Blackburn, regarded the state of manners and morals in these regions as "perhaps more degraded than in any part of the island." The people are called "ignorant and savage, yet cunning and attentive to their own interests; under few restraints from law, and still fewer from conscience." These charges are to be received with some caution, as they were written to prove the correctness of a conclusion to which the worthy vicar had come, that neither Nonconformity nor manufactures had been of any real benefit to the land. We scarcely wonder that he had formed this opinion, as we have been told that the people, when he visited these localities to collect information for his valuable histories, were so struck by the appearance of his clerical costume and stately manner, and by his evident disrelish of their bold bearing

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and freedom of speech, that in some of the villages he met with a rude reception, and was openly ridiculed. About eighty years before the arrival of Grimshaw in this neighbourhood, the gibbet-axe had ceased to fall; but the ferocity of which it told was in some degree surviving, and many of the people to whom he ministered were as rude and rough as the crags that towered above their dwellings, in this region of beetling rock and rugged mountain.*

In 1735, Grimshaw married Sarah, the daughter of John Lockwood, of Ewood Hall, gent. (She had been previously married to William Sutcliffe, gent., of Scaitcliffe Hall, and to John Ramsden, both of whom died without issue.) They had two children; Jane, who died in 1750, at Kingswood, near Bristol; and John, who survived his father, but died not long after him. Their union was soon dissolved by death, as Mrs. Grimshaw died on the 1st of November, 1739, and was buried at Luddenden.

We have an insight into the character of Grimshaw at the period immediately succeeding his wife's death, in a document still preserved in his own hand-writing, at Scaitcliffe Hall. It is dated about three weeks after her funeral, and is

* Whitaker's "Loidis et Elmete." Baines's "History of the County Palatine and Duchy of Lancaster." Hunter's "Life of Oliver Heywood." Roby's "Popular Traditions of Lancashire."

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additionally interesting as throwing light on the manners of the times in these secluded localities. It is entitled, "The Form of my Burial."

"Whenever Almighty God is pleased to receive my soul unto Himself, I require my executors to bury my body in the same grave with my deceased wife, Sarah, in the chancel of Luddenden; or, if that be impracticable, then either in the church or church-yard of Luddenden aforesaid, as near her as convenience will permit.

"To attend my funeral I desire that 20 persons be invited (of my next relations and intimatest acquaintance) and intertained in the following manner:—Let 5 quarts of claret (which will be every one a gill) be put into a punch-bowl, and drunk in wine-glasses round till done. Let every one have a penny roll of bread to eat therewith; let every one be come, and let all sit down together to the same as an emblem of Christian love. This at home.

"Let every one have a quart of ale, a 2 penny spiced cake, and afterwards, immediately before rising up, a glass of claret and a paper of bisket (4 papers to the pound); distribute the biskets first, then the wine. This at the drinking-house. And as I've by will ordered 5 pounds to bury me with, it will be disburs'd in the following manner; viz.:—

	£.	s.	d.
To a funeral sermon, 10*s.* 6*d.* To church dues 5*s.*	0	15	6
To a horse-litter £1 1*s.* To a coffin £1	2	1	0

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	£.	s.	d.
To 2 gallons of claret, 6s. 8d. per gal. 5 qts. at home, 3 qts. at drinking-house	0	13	4
To 20 2 penny cakes 3s. 4d. To 20 penny rolls 1s. 8d.	0	5	0
To 25 pr. gloves £1. To expence of inviting to funeral 3s.	1	3	0
To parson and clerk each a penny cake and other odd —*	0	2	2
Total	£ 5	0	0

In this form I hope my executors will bury me, as I hope to rise again to a blessed resurrection, through the merits of my dear Redeemer Jesus Christ. Nov. 26, 1739.

"W. GRIMSHAW."

This document evinces thoughtfulness and seriousness, and indicates a mind impressed by some of the higher truths of Christianity; but the meed of ale to each person would now be thought excessive, and this part of the arrangement seems scarcely to comport with the solemnity of the occasion. We may make some allowance for the customs of the place and people; but must still infer that he did not yet see the necessity of abstaining from "all appearance of evil," with the clearness of his more matured experience. The exactitude of each item tells of the careful economist, and the extent of the fare betokens a liberal hand and kind heart.

* A word we are not able to decipher.

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By the "horse-litter" we are to understand a vehicle in common use upon these hills until times comparatively recent, carried between two horses, the one before and the other behind, after the manner of the eastern bearers when carrying a palanquin. The distance from Todmorden to Luddenden, the appointed place of burial, is about eight miles, and the attendants would have had to walk. When the first carriage entered Todmorden, as stated to the writer by a lady who was present, the people called it "an oven upon wheels." This lady, the late venerable Hannah Lacy, saw the first carriage and the first railway-train enter the valley. Between Todmorden and Luddenden there is now a turnpike-road, a canal, and a railway.

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CHAPTER II.

THE STRUGGLE.—THE VICTORY.

On his arrival at Todmorden, the young curate found himself severed from the associates by whom he had been encouraged to lead a more godly life; and as his society was courted by the principal families of the neighbourhood, who would probably prefer a parson that could join in their merriment to one who would exhort them to leave off their sins and pray, his religious impressions were once more obliterated. We may infer that at this period he would be a pleasant companion, ready at call when a partner was wanted to complete the hands required for a game, making all sunny around him though in his own heart was the barbed arrow; and seldom refusing to attend the merry-makings to which he was invited, though known to be conducted with uproar and revel. His delight was in hunting, fishing, and playing at cards. The requirements of outward propriety were still professedly respected. His companions might swear, but he did not; and they might drink to excess, but he still shrank from the vulgarity of intemperance. On the Sabbath, his duties as a clergyman were regularly performed; the prayers were

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read with seriousness, and a sermon was preached. The voice of conscience was thus hushed; and he probably thanked God that he was not as other men, nor even as the too earnest publicans who were known to be praying in many spots around the parish.

We cannot learn by what means he was recalled to a sense of the evils attendant upon the course he was now pursuing; but, about the period at which he lost his wife, we find him again in earnest for the salvation of God. In the previous year he had made a solemn covenant with the Lord; and the circumstances attendant upon the sickness and death of one whom he appears most tenderly to have loved, may have revealed to him more clearly the emptiness of earth's richest casket, and led him to seek a more substantial treasure. The terrors of an awakened conscience now assailed him with a reality too solemn to be set aside by lower interests; and he began to seek for power over sin and purity of heart, in the methods usually employed by those who have not had the privilege of evangelical instruction. The biographer of Dr. Fawcett, on looking over his library, now at Scaitcliffe Hall, was led to conclude, from the dates written by his own hand, that previous to his conversion the books in his possession were of "the legal strain," being written by authors who pointed rather to prayer and penance, as the agencies of deliverance, than to faith and the Cross. Some of them were

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presented by Dr. Dunster, vicar of Rochdale. Grimshaw at once gave up the sports and amusements in which he had previously indulged, and avoided every form of outward transgression. To strengthen himself in the good resolutions he had formed, he kept two diaries, in one of which he recorded the sins of every day, and then confessed his iniquities to God, with a lowly and penitent heart asking that they might be pardoned, and the Divine wrath pass away from his wounded spirit. But vows, confessions, and supplications were all apparently presented in vain. Nor were the watchings and fastings he now practised attended with any happier result. The force of the strong man was too great to be overcome by means so inefficient. Whilst in this state of mind, he met with "Brooks' Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices," in which he found many cases that corresponded with his own; but his mind dwelt rather upon the scenes of suffering there presented, than upon the promises by which the gloom was to be dissipated, and he concluded that his captivity was to be perpetual. The enemy arrayed against him his mightiest phalanx, and for the period of three years it appeared to be an even warfare; Satan being still hopeful, though not triumphant. He was tried by the coming into his unwilling mind of the most repulsive thoughts, and was urged to blaspheme. To doubt the divinity of Christ was another temptation; as well as to regard the work of creation as a trifle, not

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more difficult than the carving of a child's top, or the making of a piece of machinery. Two of his parishioners attempted to commit suicide; one by hanging himself, and the other by cutting his throat. When called upon to visit the latter unhappy individual, the thought struck him that his own misery might soon lead him to the commission of the same crime. But the most determined assaults were at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when the elements were dispensed; as if among the evil spirits there had been a foreknowledge of the words of power that would afterwards so frequently fall from his lips, upon similar occasions, when thousands would be the recipients of grace. It seemed to him to be hard, that, when he was doing all he could to please God, the Divine favour was still withheld. The burden he now felt was insupportable, still hurrying him on to rash resolves. There was no one near to give him the answer of peace, when he cried out in his agony, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and had he been a Papist, he would doubtless have sought to avoid the presence of the dreaded enemy by rushing away from the world to the false repose of the mystic or the constrained silence of the monk, as many of the most earnest and gifted of men have done under the same circumstances.

To all the duties of the pastorate, so far as he understood them, he became devotedly attentive;

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regularly catechising the young, visiting the people from house to house, and preaching the necessity of putting away sin, and of paying a constant attention to the services of religion. He had still no friend to whom he could unburden his mind; and he was afraid that if he spoke to any one on these subjects, they would regard him as mad—an apostolic distinction he afterwards plenteously received without repining,—as he supposed that no one in the world was tried in a similar manner. To God, whom he feared as his Master, though he could not yet love Him as his Father and Friend, four times a day he secretly made known his sufferings, and sought deliverance. The course through which he was now passing was painful in the extreme; but the discipline was of inestimable value, and was leading to important results. By this process he learnt more clearly the vileness of the unrenewed heart, the bitterness and baseness of sin, and the utter inability of man, unaided by Divine power, to set himself right with God. Thus was he another example of the truthfulness of Luther's well-known words, that "prayers, temptations, and afflictions make a minister of the Gospel."

There was a strict churchman, James Scholefield, who resided at Calf Lee, not far from Todmorden. His wife, Mary, who had been convinced that she was a sinner, was in deep distress, and sought the advice of Grimshaw, as her

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minister, relative to the mode in which she was to find peace. The advice he gave her was in consistence with his own character at that period. "Put away those gloomy thoughts," he said; "go into merry company; divert yourself; and all will be well at last." But the wound was too deep to be healed thus slightly. She continued to cry for mercy, until the voice of her prayer was heard, and she was made happy in the forgiving love of God. Her husband, also, was made a partaker of the same grace. This is the narrative as given by Myles; but Everett says, "The name of the female referred to was Susan, not Mary; and it was under Grimshaw's own ministry that she was impressed. The poor woman had overlaid her child, in consequence of which she was greatly distressed. She applied for pastoral advice to Mr. Grimshaw, who said, 'I cannot tell what to say to you, Susan, for I am in the same state myself; but to despair of the mercy of God would be worse than all.'" These accounts differ so greatly as to lead to the supposition that they refer to two distinct persons. As they have some coincidences, they may therefrom have been blended by tradition into one event. It is said that when Grimshaw had found peace with God, he went to Scholefield's house, and thus addressed his wife: "O Mary, what a blind leader of the blind was I when I came to take off thy burden, by exhorting thee to live in pleasure, and to follow the vain amusements

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of the world! But God has in mercy pardoned and blessed us all three: blessed be His great Name!"

The day of deliverance was at hand. On visiting one of his friends, he met with a book, which he opened. Before him, against the wall, was a range of pewter dishes, after the manner of those times in respectable houses, and in the unspotted lustre of which the matrons took great pride. There were two distinct flashes from these bright mirrors, which attracted his attention to the book. It was Owen on Justification. He took it home, and studied it with diligence and prayer; and was led thereby to see that, however long his present course might be continued, it must be ever unavailing as the agency of his deliverance. "I was now willing," he says, as quoted by Venn, "to renounce myself; every degree of fancied merit and ability; and to embrace Christ only, for my all in all. O, what light and comfort did I now enjoy in my own soul, and what a taste of the pardoning love of God!" At this time, according to the testimony of Venn, Newton, Myles, and Wesley himself, "he was an entire stranger to the Methodists," "and an entire stranger to all their writings also, except a single sermon upon Galatians iii. 24, and a letter to the people of England, published by the Rev. Mr. Seagrave, in which he was surprised to find the divinity, in all material points, of the

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very same kind with what he now saw with his own eyes in the word of God, and from which all his peace had flowed." The Bible became a new book to him. Before, he knew it only in the letter, but now, in its spiritual power; and he afterwards told a friend who visited him, Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, that had God "drawn up his Bible to heaven, and sent him down another, it could not have been newer to him." *

There is some obscurity, as to order of development, in the accounts we have received of Grimshaw's release from "the spirit of bondage," and it is difficult to harmonize them with an absolute certainty that our conclusions are correct. Wesley, referring to the period when he was apparently in a trance, says: "One day in 1742, being in the utmost agony of mind, there was clearly represented to him Jesus Christ, pleading with God the Father, and gaining a free pardon for him." He then inserts the above quotation as given by Venn. But at this time he was resident at Haworth; and, according to Venn's account, he had received the pardoning love of God before his departure from Todmorden. Yet it would appear from a narrative afterwards to be inserted, that it was not until the year 1745

* Venn's "Substance of a Sermon preached on the Death of Grimshaw." Hanbury's "Extracts from Williams's Diary." "Life of the Rev. John Fawcett, D.D.," by his Son. Everett's "Wesleyan Methodism in Manchester."

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his mind received its clearest insight into the doctrine of salvation by faith "without the deeds of the law." All the accounts were written many years after the event; and from lapse of memory, or defectiveness of information, the discrepances may have arisen that are now the cause of our perplexity.

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CHAPTER III.

HAWORTH.

On the 26th of May, 1742, Grimshaw was inducted into the living of Haworth, a chapelry in the parish of Bradford. Whatever may have been the character of the locality in which he formerly resided, it was polished and refined in comparison with the region which was now to be the theatre of his arduous labours, though on the border of the same moor. It is along the margin of the principal streams of a country that civilization first progresses, and to which it is for some time confined. Todmorden is situated in the upper part of the valley of the Calder, near that portion which formed one of the ancient passes between Yorkshire and Lancashire, when the streams of population, pursuing respectively the banks of the Calder and Roche, met on the bare hills to which we trace their source. In its glens, approaching nearer to the picturesque beauty of the lower ranges of the Alps than any other part of England we have seen, are the mansions of several old families; and the presence of families of this order of respectability frequently tends to soften the manners of the poorer classes, and bring them some degree of religious privilege.

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The residents in these ancient homes were not so far raised above the rest of the people, or so entirely separated from them, as to destroy the influence of their position; and were yet sufficiently elevated to have intercourse with the more distant parts of the country, by which some degree of refinement would be introduced into these otherwise isolated valleys. As contrasted with Todmorden, Haworth stands nearer the moor; the vale that it overlooks is the bed of a lateral and smaller stream; its aspect is more rugged; and it has few families near it of the same influence and importance as those which were then found in connexion with Grimshaw's former charge.

"Haworth," writes John Newton, "is one of those obscure places which (like the fishing-towns of Galilee, favoured with our Lord's presence) owe all their celebrity to the Gospel. Its name would scarcely be known at a distance, were it not connected with the name of Grimshaw." It is evident that the writer was no prophet, as Haworth, since the death of the authoress of "Jane Eyre," has become a place of frequent pilgrimage; and lords and ladies of high degree have come to visit her venerable parent, or to traverse the spots where she timidly rambled, when seeking the imagery that aided her in writing the works by which she has fascinated so many thousands with her bold thoughts and striking incidents. Here, with her high-

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souled sisters and misguided brother, she sought the wild-flower when a child; and in after-years, with a sad heart, but with a purpose strong as the oldest rock around her, she here communed with the unearthly world she had herself created from the scenes presented within the circle of her own vision,—contracted as to its limit, but keener than the flash of the serpent's eye as to the vividness of its glance,—and from the chaos of her own strange and terrible experiences.

The village of Haworth is situated upon a declivity that shelves down toward a ravine, along which flows the Worth. This stream is a feeder of the Aire, into which it falls near Riddlesden, after passing, at the distance of about four miles from Haworth, the rising town of Keighley. It is a long narrow village, substantially built with brown stone; its appearance in excellent keeping with the bald character of the surrounding scenery. There is one extended street, paved with wrought stones, on which the wooden clogs of the children, rimmed with iron, fall with startling noise, as the wild young northerns come to gaze upon the stranger. The street rises with a steepness that in some places would be supposed to render the higher parts of the village inaccessible to wheeled carriages. Indeed, the neighbour-villagers have a legend, such as the country-folk of rival localities always love to tell, that when the first carriage came to Haworth, not many centuries ago, the astonished

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people brought out grass and other provender wherewith to feed it, under the supposition that it was some strange animal! On the Worth there are several worsted-mills, by working at which the greater part of the present inhabitants gain their livelihood. But, to learn the nobler features of this far-famed spot, we must surmount the hill upon which it stands, and then look around from the elevation thus gained. Before us is a glorious expanse of moor and mountain, stretching onward for miles and miles, with scarcely a dwelling to break the sense of solitude. The blue heather mantles the plain, darkened here and there by the heaps of turf, or peat, that the lone labourer has prepared for his winter's fuel; and presenting occasional fissures, with boulders in their bed, that have been made by the rain-stream.

We advise the traveller who has time at his command to approach Haworth from Hebden-Bridge, in the vale of the Calder. At a turn in the road where he loses sight of the Hebble, he will have beneath him one of the loveliest nooks in all England. Soon afterwards he will come to the uninclosed moor; the stones reared on the road-side at intervals, but extending several miles, being there placed to point out the path to the wayfarer, when the moor is covered by the deep snow. On reaching the base of the hill on the opposite side of the table-land he has traversed, he will perceive a small low church, which, were

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it not for the newness of the stone, he might suppose was reared by the Saxon occupant of these wilds, before glass was known, and when stability was the principal grace. The first sight of Haworth will be from an elevation overlooking a twin stream to the Worth. From this point, when seen at night, while the lights are gleaming in the houses, the village has often struck us as resembling the appearance that must be presented by the phosphoric wake of the sea-serpent, if the monster thus named really inhabits the deep.*

When seen by day from the same position, its houses are like a long castellated wall, protecting the keep beyond, with the church as the crowning watch-tower.

The inhabitants of Haworth claim a very venerable antiquity for their ecclesiastical status. Built up in the wall of the church-tower, there is a stone with this inscription, "*Hic fecit cœnobium Monachorum Autaste fundatore anno Christi sex-*

* The same thought seems to have been entertained by an American writer, who describes it as "one long unit of building, the whole affair looking like some huge saurian monster, creeping up the hill-side, with his head near the top, and his tail floundering at the base." Mrs. Gaskell, in her "Life of Charlotte Brontë," says: "I left Keighley in a car for Haworth, four miles off,—four tough, steep, scrambling miles,—the road winding between the wave-like hills that rose and fell on every side of the horizon, with a long illimitable sinuous look, as if they were a part of the line of the Great Serpent, which the Norse legend says girdles the world."

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centesimo." If this be true, the monks must have belonged to some church of the ancient Britons, as Paulinus, the Anglo-Saxon apostle of the north, had not then appeared. "The origin of this strange misapprehension," says Dr. Whitaker, who may be much better trusted in matters relating to antiquity than to Nonconformity, "is visible on an adjoining stone; '*Orate pro bono statu Eutest Tod*,' in the character of Henry the Eighth's time. Now, every antiquary knows that the formulary of prayer, *pro bono statu*, always refers to the living. I suspect that this singular Christian name has been mistaken by the stone-cutter for Eustat., a contraction of Eustatius: but the word 'Tod,' which has been misread for the Arabic numerals 600, is perfectly fair and legible. I suspect, however, that some minister of the chapel has committed this twofold blunder, first, of assigning to the place this absurd and impossible antiquity; and secondly, from the common form, *Orate pro bono statu*, of inferring here the existence of a monastery." When Domesday was taken, the parish is described as "desolate and waste;" and in the fourteenth century only a twentieth part had been reclaimed. In still more ancient times, when the plains to the seaboard of the east and west were devastated by successive invaders, a few from each foray would escape to these mountains, which were then a broad border-land between the two civilizations. These refugees, in their turn, would be tempted

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to enter upon a life of rapine, and would become lawless moss-troopers; lovers of the cheer found in the greenwood covert, or wrested from the lowland herdsman. The reputed tomb of Robin Hood was within the limits of Grimshaw's regular itinerancy.

It would have required all the brightness of a May morning, and the merry nod of the heather to the passing breeze, and the voice of the lark singing her most lively lay, to cheer the spirits of the new incumbent, as he rode over the almost trackless moor between Todmorden and Haworth, in the whole of which way he would scarcely see a single house; had not his soul been moved by an impulse that uplifted him far above exterior circumstances, and would have invested even a much more uninviting locality with comeliness and comfort. There might be some misgivings as to his reception. In other places, the people of this neighbourhood had not unfrequently opposed the entrance into the church of the minister appointed by the patron of the living; and in some instances the fury of the mob had only been overcome by the assistance of a party of dragoons. The vestrymen of Haworth, from the supposed antiquity of their church, are rigidly jealous of their rights; and one of the most memorable of these battles ecclesiastical was here fought on the death of the last incumbent. They insist that formerly the appointment to the living was conjointly vested in the vicar of Bradford and

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a number of trustees. On this occasion the Rev. Samuel Redhead, a clergyman of great respectability and worth, was appointed on the sole authority of the vicar. On the first Sunday of his attendance, "to read himself in," the whole congregation left the church as the second lesson was read, and he and the clerk were left to conclude the service alone. The next Sunday a man rode into the church upon an ass, with a number of old hats piled upon his head. On the third Sunday a chimney-sweeper ascended the pulpit-steps, and with solemn mockery seemed to nod assent to the sentences of the sermon. On emerging from the church, Mr. Redhead was thrown into a heap of soot, prepared for the purpose; and it was with difficulty he made his escape from their rage. This was his last attempt; the mob had conquered; and the Rev. Patrick Brontë was appointed in his stead.

We can learn little about the religious history of Haworth prior to the appointment of Grimshaw. On the passing of the Act of Uniformity, in 1662, Robert Town, sen., was ejected from this chapelry. He had formerly been minister of Elland, and died the following year. On the 28th of March, 1692, Haworth was visited by Oliver Heywood. "I rode," he says, "to preach at J. Rhodes's, in Haworth-Town. God greatly assisted my heart in weeping and wrestling with Him for the conversion of sinners, and in preaching on Isa. lv. 7. There was a great crowd of people, and they were

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attentive. Who knows what good may be done? The same day, being Easter Monday, the vicar of Bradford sat all day at an alehouse, gathering his dues in Haworth parish. There was wont always to be a sermon in the church that day, but Mr. P—— had laid it aside. Many flocked to him to pay the Easter reckonings, which came to about £10, and then came to hear me. I had nothing for my pains, except [that] some four or five put sixpence apiece into my hand. I rode fourteen miles (from Coley) there and back, and was greatly comforted in my day's work, and thought it was better than his. Though my worldly gains were short, yet may I gain one soul to Christ by my hard labour, and I shall be satisfied." Here was metal from the right mine.

In 1739 there was published "A Letter to the People of Haworth Parish, by Isaac Smith, M.A., occasioned by his late Suspension." The style and character of the letter may be learnt from the introductory paragraphs: "Whereas, my good neighbours and brethren in Christ Jesus, it hath pleased God Almighty, in His Providence, to remove me for a season from you, so that now I am not permitted to speak to you from the pulpit, as has been usual for some years by past; I account it my bounden duty to instruct you by epistle, and to bring to your remembrance what things you have heard and been taught, when I ministered among you in much weakness. Affliction cometh not of the dust, neither doth trouble

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spring out of the ground. Wherefore, without reflecting on the malice of devils or men in this case, I desire that both you and I may impartially look at ourselves, and sincerely consider if we have not been the meritorious cause of what has befallen us; which I hope and desire may not be the avenges of a just and angry God, but the loving correction of a merciful and compassionate Father.

"And if I, first, look at myself, I must confess, with weeping eyes, I have not been so careful and diligent in doctrine and life as I ought to have been: therefore the Lord is holy in all His ways, and righteous in all His works; and I am punished infinitely less than what my sins deserve: not to make mention of that fault, (whether great or little, I leave the world to judge,) or rather misfortune, for which I now lie under the censure of suspension from the ministry. And, as for your part, those Gospel truths which were preached unto you, with plainness and sincerity, were become so cheap and common (I wish I be mistaken) as practically to be esteemed by you small and inconsiderable; they having little influence on your hearts and lives; so that you were become neither cold nor hot: therefore your candlestick is removed out of its place. I hope I can truly say, to my great comfort and joy, that some of you, and I heartily wish the number was far greater, have, through the blessing of God upon my poor endeavours, been delivered from

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the power of Satan and darkness, and translated into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; so that, though once you were ignorant and careless in the matters of religion and your souls, yet now you know what you are by nature and practice, and are seriously concerned for obtaining a blessed eternity. And I daily pray, that He who has begun a good work of grace in your hearts will not suffer it to die and come to nothing, but will continue and perfect it at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that one day you may be my joy and crown of rejoicing. But this boasting is almost over, when I consider what numbers in the Haworth parish are yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, strangers to themselves, strangers to God and Christ, and strangers to their duty."

The reason of Mr. Smith's suspension is not expressly stated; but we may infer that it was on account of a marriage he had illegally celebrated. "You know it has been a custom," he says, "from time immemorial, to publish and marry people from Bradford parish at Haworth church, without contradiction or opposition; and though, eight or nine years since, I published and married a couple from the aforesaid parish, it was nothing but what my predecessors had always done, beyond the memory of man. But, finding it contrary to the rules of our Church, I offered mine adversary submission and satisfaction, and that he should

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be sole arbitrator in the case, according to his own conscience, and make a bill of whatever it had cost him, and I would pay all to a farthing, and never transgress into his parish again, if I knew it, but keep me to mine own."

It was supposed that the party to whom he refers had been sent as "a bite," in order to entrap him. We do not wonder that so faithful a minister had many enemies among the unrepentant and wicked. We learn from his letter that for some years he was accustomed to have prayers in the church every day at nine in the morning, and three in the evening; the Communion was celebrated six times in the year; and the children and servants were regularly catechised on the Sabbath. If the reproof of sin in his sermons was as pointed, and his appeals to the conscience were as impassioned, as those contained in his letter, his ministry must have been of the most arousing character. The minds of his parishioners would be prepared by these warnings for the offer of a free salvation, such as they soon afterwards received. But, as to the privileges resulting from a personal faith in Christ Jesus, he had less light. He says, in one place, that "alms deliver from death, and make an atonement for sins."

His suspension was followed, after an interval of about three years, by the appointment of Grimshaw to the curacy; and the lamp of God, which for a time appeared to have been taken away,

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was replaced, to shine with greater lustre, and send its influence to the most remote, as well as to the most degraded, localities of the parish. It is evident that the locality needed an instructer with the sinew and soul of the new incumbent. He set himself to the task before him with a boldness that nothing could daunt, and an energy that never tired; and he lived to see that his labour had not been in vain.

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CHAPTER IV.

BENJAMIN INGHAM.—REMARKABLE VISITATION.—WILLIAM DARNEY.

WHILST Grimshaw was yet resident in Todmorden, the great work of evangelization had been commenced in Yorkshire, into which he afterwards entered with a devotedness and ardour scarcely surpassed by any of his contemporaries. The Rev. Benjamin Ingham, one of the original band of Methodists at Oxford, who had accompanied the Wesleys to America, resided at Ossett, in the parish of Dewsbury. In 1734 he began to hold religious meetings, and, after his ordination in 1735, preached with great power in the churches around Wakefield, Leeds, and Halifax. But the opposition of the clergy soon became formidable, and in 1739 he was prohibited from preaching in any of the churches in the diocese of York. The wide arena consecrated by his Divine Master was, however, yet open to him; and he then delivered the message of the Gospel in houses, barns, and the open field. Forty different places were regularly visited, and a system of itinerancy was commenced.

We are informed, by the author of "The Life

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and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," that, about eight months after Grimshaw had begun his ministry in Haworth, he became acquainted with Ingham, and soon afterwards closely connected himself with him, labouring unweariedly to diffuse the glad tidings of the Gospel amongst his Societies. About the same period John Nelson, a stonemason, whose name afterwards became great in the sight of thousands, began to proclaim the truth in the same locality. "The parson and the mason," says Grimshaw, in a letter to Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow, "laboured together with great success for some time, and formed Societies, whose exercise consisted in praying, singing, reading, and conferring together about the work of God in their souls." * The two evangelists did not long work together in harmony. From the terms in which Grimshaw speaks of this event, we should infer that there had not been any great intimacy between himself and Ingham up to this period: "In 1742, I am informed that they separated." Ingham had introduced the Moravians into Yorkshire, many of whom, at that time, had imbibed errors which proved most adverse to the work of God; and Nelson withstood them with the courage of a lion when his den is attacked by the ruthless hunter.

The first introduction of Nelson to Haworth

* Gillies's "Historical Collections relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel."

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was by no means in accordance with the will of its incumbent. An announcement having been made that he intended to visit the village, Grimshaw charged his people not to go near him, as he understood that wherever the Methodists went they turned everything upside down. A poor woman resolved, however, that she would go to hear him, whatever might be the consequence. He preached in an old building called the Hall. The old woman was there, with many others, and was not a little surprised to hear him give out as his text, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." She listened attentively, and rested not until she also was changed, and had become a new creature in Christ Jesus.*

It was about the same period that a more extensive work commenced at Haworth. "A few souls," says Grimshaw, in the letter to Gillies, "were affected under the word, brought to see their lost estate by nature, and to experience peace through faith in the blood of Jesus. My church began to be crowded, insomuch that many were obliged to stand out of doors. Here, as in other places, it was amazing to see and hear what weeping, roaring, and agonies many people were seized with, at the apprehension of their sinful state, and the wrath of God. After a season I

* This anecdote was heard as a tradition, by the Rev. Thornley Smith, during his residence at Haworth; and is inserted in the "Christian Miscellany" for February, 1858.

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joined people (such as were truly seeking or had found the Lord) in Society for the exercises abovesaid. These meetings here, as it is all over the kingdom, it may be your desire to understand, are held once a week, about two hours, and are called 'classes,' consisting of about ten or twelve members each. We have much of the Lord's presence among them; and greatly, in consequence, must such meetings conduce to Christian edification. Not unto me, not unto me, but unto the Lord Jesu's name solely be the praise!"

In the same memorable year, an occurrence took place, about which Grimshaw seldom spoke, and then only to the more devoted of the servants of the Lord. Newton never heard him refer to it, though a most intimate friend, nor could he discover, at the time he wrote his Memoir, that he had ever mentioned it to any one then living. When men are brought to a partial knowledge of the truth, without the medium of a living agency, it is not strange to find that there are peculiarities in their experience; and in their recital we have sometimes accounts of extraordinary visitations and influences. We will not take upon ourselves to pronounce on the character of each particular case; but we doubt not that, in many such instances, there has been the interposition of God, for wise and beneficent purpose. The one now to be related appears to have been of this character. We insert the account in the words

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of the original recorders, as being more likely to convey thus a correct impression, than by any paraphrase or comment from our own pen.

In 1747 Joseph Williams wrote to the Rev. Malachi Blake, a Nonconformist minister, of Blandford, a letter of some length, on the zeal and promise of the clergyman at Haworth, as a preacher of the truth. It appears in the "Evangelical Magazine" for November, 1794. The relation "was learned from Mr. Grimshaw" by the writer, and was given to him in the room in which the scene partly occurred:—

"Before he had been a long time at Haworth, one Lord's-day morning, while he was reading the public service, he was seized with a giddiness which prevailed upon him until he could not proceed. He therefore beckoned to one near him, who helped him out of the church, leading him to the clerk's house, where he gave this relation. Expecting it to be death, he, all through the church, and all the way, was earnestly exhorting the people to flee to Christ, to abide in Him, to give all diligence, &c. As soon as he was sat down, he found his arms, from above his elbows, and his legs, from above his knees, cold as death. Those about him kept rubbing them with a supply of hot cloths, more than an hour; but he got no heat. While this was doing, he, sitting all the while with his face erect, with his eyes open and lifted up to the ceiling, fell into a trance, in which he saw a dark, foul passage,

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into which he must go; and, being entered, saw a very high wall on the right hand, on the other side of which was hell. He heard, or rather overheard, somewhat of a conference, betwixt God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning him; and for a long time it seemed to go hard against him: for God the Father would have him to be damned, because he had not wholly relinquished his own righteousness, to trust solely and entirely in the merits and righteousness of Christ; but the Lord Jesus pleaded for him. A long time he was held in suspense; hoping, yet fearing; till at last he saw evidently the Lord Jesus thrust down his hands and feet, as it were below the ceiling, while he remarked that the nail-holes were ragged and blue, and streamed with fresh blood. Instantly he was filled with a joyful assurance; his arms and legs grew comfortably warm; he rose up, and found himself perfectly well, and was filled with joy in the Holy Ghost; and cheerfully performed the afternoon service. This he does not divulge to everybody, but only to those who, he thinks, have ears to hear. Since that, he has never lost sight of his evidence, has a flaming love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his ministry has been attended with wonderful success."

In Newton's "Life of Grimshaw" there is another account of the same incident, agreeing with it in all essential particulars, said to have

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been given "by a person who then lived with him as a servant:" but to whom she repeated it we are not told. "She says that she was called up that morning at five o'clock, but found her master was risen before her, and was retired into a private room for prayer. After remaining there some time, he went to a house in Haworth, where he was engaged awhile in religious exercises with some of his people; he then returned home, and retired to prayer again, and from thence to church. She believes he had not eaten anything that morning. While reading the second lesson, he fell down; he was soon helped, and led out of the church. He continued to talk to the people as he went, and desired them not to disperse, for he hoped he should return to them soon, and he had something extraordinary to say to them. They led him to the clerk's house, where he lay seemingly insensible. She and others were employed in rubbing his limbs (which were exceedingly cold) with warm cloths. After some time, he came to himself, and seemed to be in a great rapture. The first words he spoke were, 'I have had a glorious vision from the third heaven.' But she does not remember that he made any mention of what he had seen. In the afternoon he performed service in the church, which began at two o'clock, and preached and spoke so long to the people, that it was seven in the evening before he returned home." *

* Newton's "Memoirs of the Life of the late Rev. William

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It appears from a Covenant, hereafter to be inserted, that this visitation took place on the 2d of September, 1744. Grimshaw there calls it "that wonderful manifestation." It was thought by Newton that it is to this fact Dr. Doddridge alludes in his "Life of Colonel Gardiner," written in the year 1747. After relating the circumstances of the colonel's conversion, he says that this amazing story does not stand alone, and proceeds: "I hope the world will be particularly informed, that there is a second that does very nearly approach it, whenever the Established Church of England shall lose one of its brightest living ornaments, and one of the most useful members which that or perhaps any other Christian communion can boast of. In the mean time, may his exemplary life be long continued, and his zealous ministry abundantly prospered."*

Southey calls Grimshaw "the most eccentric" of the clergymen who entered into Wesley's views, and heartily co-operated with him; whilst he regarded Fletcher as the most remarkable for intellectual powers, and Coke as the one who

Grimshaw, in Six Letters to the late Rev. Henry Foster." Myles's "Life and Writings of the late Rev. William Grimshaw."

* The author of the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon" is of opinion that the allusion of Doddridge is to Thompson, vicar of St. Ginny's, near Camelford, in Cornwall.

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entered most entirely into the affairs of the Society. Of the incumbent of Haworth he speaks with more than his usual wilfulness. "In his unconverted state," he says, "this person was certainly insane; and, had he given utterance at that time to the monstrous and horrible imaginations which he afterwards revealed to his spiritual friends, he would deservedly have been sent to Bedlam. The change of mind, which was not until he had been ten years in holy orders, was preceded by what he believed to be a miraculous impression on his senses, and which may possibly have been an electrical or galvanic effect; and in the course of his ministry he was favoured with a vision in a trance; that is to say, he mistook delirium for reality."* But nowhere does Grimshaw say that he supposed it to be a miraculous impression, nor is such a supposition made by the narrator; and yet it would be easier to believe this, than that it was "an electrical or galvanic effect." The mention of a pewter plate in the account of his conversion, seems rather to refer the flashes to a natural cause; but the impression resulting from their occurrence might be by the Spirit of God as a means for attracting his attention to the contents of the book, and which otherwise he might have passed by without further notice. Nor is there any proof that he mistook "delirium for reality." We speak of "seeing" what passes before us in a

* Southey's "Life of Wesley."

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dream; and that Grimshaw thus saw all he represents himself as seeing, we have no right to call in question, whatever may be the terms in which the psychologist would speak of the phenomena. The previous fasting would account for the fainting-fit, but not for the incidents by which it was accompanied, nor for the consequences by which it was followed.

From an unexpected source, further light was soon afterwards received on the doctrine that imparted to Grimshaw's ministry its vitality and power. The rumours that were spread abroad about the Methodists, when their influence first began to be felt in the neighbourhood of Haworth, were too loud, and too decisive in their character, not to excite the attention of a mind like that of its incumbent, at the early dawn of his earnestness. His first impression of them was unfavourable, as he had heard that they preached the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, which, according to our authority, he then strangely supposed to be an error of Popery: but it is probable that this statement requires some modification, and that the doubts in his mind arose rather from the unreserved manner in which the privilege of the believing penitent was presented by the Methodists, than from the doctrine itself. He must already, in his own experience, according to the information given in preceding pages, have been made a partaker of the grace of

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God; but there might still be a want of clearness of perception as to the scriptural principles upon which the pardon of sin and the entire sanctification of the heart are to be obtained. When the true light burst upon his soul, it may have been accompanied by a radiance so intense as to seem to cast all his previous attainments into comparative insignificance and shade. But we proceed with the narrative, as given by one who was himself acquainted with Grimshaw. It being reported that William Darney, a Scotchman, was to preach near Haworth, the incumbent resolved to appear at the place appointed, and, by publicly confuting his arguments, prevent his parishioners from being thereby led astray. It was upon the subject in question that Darney was preaching when his reverend opponent entered the house. Numerous arguments were brought forward by him to prove that "a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;" and an appeal was made as to the truth of each proposition, to the Scriptures, the Liturgy, and the Articles of the Church of England. These were authorities to which Grimshaw was accustomed to bow with entire submissiveness; and the thought soon arose, that perhaps he himself was wrong, and the Methodists were right. To learn the truth more certainly, he conversed with Darney in private; but for a time timidly, and with many misgivings. Not far from the parsonage were several stone-quarries, and other secret places; and in these the

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conversations were carried on. When the bark of a distant dog, or some other noise, was heard, he would say, "Hush! there is somebody coming." The rabble would talk of the matter, when they heard of it, sneeringly; and the Methodists would rejoice in its occurrence, as a proof that the very parson of the parish was becoming interested in their work. The effect of these interviews was soon apparent. No further attempt at concealment was required. The confession of the change that had taken place in his views was at once proclaimed. On an early occasion he gave out the hymns when Darney preached, and soon afterwards took a more decided part, by praying in public at one of the services held by the northern evangelist. The shout of the foe was soon heard, and it was said, "Mad Grimshaw is turned Scotch Will's clerk, and Scotch Will guides and leads mad Grimshaw." But it was now little to him to be held up to ridicule by the profane. The power arising from the clearer insight he now received into the truth, revealing privileges not yet attained, but within his immediate reach, was more than a recompense for the opposition by which he was assailed. At first its reception was attended by an effect most depressing and painful. He was so overcome by a sense of his manifold negligences and offences, when his life was brought into contrast with the law, as now presented to his unsealed vision, that he supposed himself to be still under the wrath

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of God, and could not see how he was to preach salvation by faith, and the necessity of a clean heart, whilst he himself was without the possession of these great blessings. The advice given by Darney, who probably understood his position much better than he did himself, was to this effect: "You must preach these things till you experience them; and then, because you know and enjoy them."

It has been generally concluded, that at the time of Grimshaw's arrival at Haworth he was living in the enjoyment of the liberty of the Gospel, through the exercise of a personal faith in the promises of God, although unaware that this was the common heritage of the church, and unacquainted with any one who had attained a like privilege. But the facts we have now stated are at variance with this conclusion; and we may receive them as trustworthy, as they were given to Myles by James Ashworth, of Failings, near Rochdale, who knew Grimshaw, and had them from Darney's own mouth. In the peculiarity of some of Grimshaw's views, and in the affection with which he always regarded Darney, in the midst of numerous eccentricities and some serious failings, we have evidence that the influence exercised upon him by this intrepid servant of God was of no ordinary character.

Our earliest information upon this subject is from Williams, of Kidderminster, a Nonconformist and an eminent clothier, who says of

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Grimshaw, in the letter to which we have already alluded, "He reckons, at least, one hundred and twenty souls savingly renewed, whom he hath formed into little classes, after the manner of the Methodists; and it is amazing to see how much he hath drunk into their spirit, though he never saw or conversed with any of them." This was written in March, 1747. It was on the 13th of February, 1746, that Williams visited Haworth. Writing in his journal, immediately after his return home, he mentions the number of conversions, and the formation of the converts into "little Societies," but makes no reference to the Methodists.

But it would appear that Grimshaw had been introduced to Ingham before the time of Williams's visit; and it is certain that he must have known Darney, as he says, in the letter to Gillies, that Darney preached at Haworth in 1745, and adds, "The Lord was with him indeed; *I have cause to bless God for it.*" The testimony of Williams himself is equally decisive. "Mr. Grimshaw told me," he says in his journal, "that in the good work carried on in his parish, he hath had much assistance from two laymen,—the one a Scotchman, and an old disciple; the other a parishioner, converted, as he supposeth, under his own ministry." There is here an error as to one of the helpers, as they were both parishioners, known everywhere as "Grimshaw's men;" but, though the information may be in

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this respect incorrect, it is conclusive on the point in question, as the Scotchman must have been William Darney. The statement as to Grimshaw's non-acquaintance with the Methodists in 1746 can, therefore, only be true on the supposition that Darney was not at this time regarded as a Methodist preacher.* Myles informs us, in his "Chronological History of the Methodists," that Darney became one of Wesley's preachers in 1742, but gives no authority for this date. We know from his own writings that it was in this year he began to preach; and we learn from other sources that in 1744 he, along with others, who were regarded as "a new set of preachers," had formed Societies in Todmorden and Rosendale; and their formation was afterwards regarded as the commencement of Methodism in this part of Lancashire.

From a review of all the circumstances before us, we are led to the conclusion, that at the time of Grimshaw's removal from Todmorden he had become a zealous and exemplary minister; and that in the remarkable manifestation with which he was soon afterwards visited, he was enabled to lay hold of the promises of the Gospel with greater power: but that it was not until he had come into closer union with the Methodists he

* Writing to Wesley, May 30, 1747, Grimshaw says, "William Darney desires a particular letter from you respecting his going into Scotland. He would go after Whitsuntide, if you think proper."

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entered into the fulness of the privilege of the sons of God; and that it was through Ingham he learnt the importance of the establishment of classes, with an approved "leader," for the mutual edification of the members of the church.

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CHAPTER V.

PAROCHIAL LABOURS.—ITINERANCY.—THE LORD'S DAY.—WAKES.—RACES.

NEITHER the Pharisee nor the Sadducee approves of the earnestness of the evangelist. Both regard it as undignified and indecorous; and in so saying, we take the mildest of their epithets. But it is a significant fact, that wherever there is the energetic preaching of "Christ crucified," though accompanying it there may be the faithful application of the terrors of the law, the simplest service, with these characteristics, will be attended by multitudes, whilst the soulless ceremonies and cold moralities of the formalist will be left to a few will-worshippers and pensioners. They who would influence the masses must imitate Christ. Unto the poor "the Gospel" must be "preached."

The voice of Grimshaw rushed and rolled among his astonished parishioners, at his entrance upon the duties of his new charge, like the peal of the thunder on the surrounding moors. The church was soon filled; and multitudes congregated from all the hamlets whence it was possible to reach it, even though much more than "a

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Sabbath-day's journey" had to be undertaken for the purpose. But, so long as he thought there was one soul for which he was accountable unreached by the message of mercy, he could not remain at ease. There were the poor and ill-clad —"the ragged classes," as we should now call them—who would not worship in the presence of their richer neighbours; and for them he commenced a Sabbath-evening lecture. There were also the sick and the aged, as well as the idlers, who could not be warned or instructed from the pulpit of his church. To take away from the careless every excuse for not coming to listen to the word of God, and to afford to the rest the means of grace they needed and could receive by no other method, he adopted the plan of preaching in the houses of the people. There were four hamlets under his care, in each of which he preached three times in every month. Even this small irregularity excited the anger of some of the clergy. Nor is this to be wondered at, when it is known that Dr. Hook, in his former parish, had inveighed against preaching in houses, "as a dishonour to God, and tending to bring teaching into contempt."

In the primitive church there were no perambulations of parochial boundary, with noisy boys and portly beadle. Limitations like those of after-date were then unknown; and no one could say on one side of a defined line, "This is of

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Paul," and on the other, "This is of Apollos." The echo of the great command, "*into all the world*," was yet too loud in its tone, and too authoritative in its majesty, to allow of its being frittered into fragments of acres, or contracted into a certain number of square miles. Grimshaw felt within his breast the stirring presence of an apostle's zeal; and the injunction of Christ seemed to him to have the same force and freshness on the bleak hills around Haworth as when originally given amidst the vine-clad mountains of Judæa. When men from other places found that he came to the verge of their own parish in his cottage-ministrations, they could not understand why he should not step over the boundary, and be an instrument of good in more distant localities, which equally needed to hear the blast of the faithful watchman's trumpet. From numerous farmsteads and hamlets the cry was heard, "Come over, and help us;" and not more pleasant is the monarch's call to the expectant courtier than was this appeal to his yearning heart. The limit once passed, it was only home-duty that restricted him from wandering as far and fearlessly as Whitefield or the Wesleys.

There must have been much delightful excitement about the life of "the round preacher," as he was then called, notwithstanding his hard fare, wearied frame, and titheless purse. There is ever something welcome about conquering difficulties, and more especially when we over-

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come for Christ. The traveller by rail, with its regular movements and well-ordered refreshment-rooms, or the pastor who ministers only to a stated congregation, knows nothing of the uplifting buoyancy that fills the soul of the man who lives almost entirely on horseback, with the fresh music of the birds by day, and the still voice of the stars by night, continually cheering him, and God's glory around him everywhere; and who has in succession the crag for his pulpit, the glen for his oratory, the market-place for his church, and the roused rabble for his auditors. Some of the noblest men and most powerful preachers the world ever saw, read for their high degree in this rough school.

Two "rounds" were established by Grimshaw, in which, alternately, he spent the six days of the week. At this time twelve or fourteen sermons, and sometimes as many as thirty, were preached in a week, when he was in full work. He regarded it as "an idle week" when the tale did not amount to more than a dozen. It was to preserve those in their profession who had received the truth, that meetings were established for private monition and prayer, with an appointed leader over each company. Two of his assistants, Paul Greenwood and Jonathan Maskew, were permitted to exhort, and expound the Scriptures; and it was his avowed conviction that the labours of these lay brethren had been more effective than his own in the rescue of souls. All the men

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upon whom these responsibilities rested were statedly met by him, and he received from each an account of his labours and successes. The usual diversity of effect attended the faithful preaching of God's servants. Into some hearts the doctrine distilled silently as the dew, or fell as the gentle rain upon the mown grass; whilst into others it came like the furious hurricane, and for a time all was agitation and terror.

"In each of his little Societies," says Williams, "Mr. Grimshaw takes care that there shall be one man, at least, who, to use his own words, hath received the gift of prayer; so that among the duties of religion exercised by them, such as reading, singing, and religious conference, prayer may always be one. It is also the same person's business to watch over this little flock, to mark the growth or decay of each individual, of which at proper times he gives an account to Mr. Grimshaw, that he may the better know to speak a suitable word to them. He told me that many of his people had lately received the gift of prayer in a remarkable manner, to which, before he came among them, they were utter strangers. He reckons, if I remember rightly, about three hundred families in his parish, which, for the greater regularity in visiting them, he hath divided into four parts; and he makes it a rule, never to be departed from, if he have sufficient strength and opportunity, to visit three families in each division every month. His way is, to fix

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upon one of the larger houses, and to invite thither two or three of the nearest families: when they come together, after prayer, he gives them a serious exhortation, without taking a text, or confining himself to any particular method. In general, he puts them in mind of the depravity natural to mankind in consequence of Adam's apostasy; the necessity of a thorough change to be wrought in them, in order to their being made fit for the employment and blessedness of heaven; that in order to obtain a new, a divine nature, they must go to God through Christ, by faith and fervent prayer, and must practise self-denial and mortification; must exercise themselves unto godliness, and abound in all 'the fruits of righteousness,' yet still relying solely upon the merits and righteousness of Christ for pardon of sin and acceptance with God. Thus, with a constant variety of expression, he preaches the Gospel from house to house."

Little attention was then paid to the observance of the Lord's day; and this indifference may be traced to known causes of great influence. The weekly market was formerly held at Bradford on the Sabbath. The custom was accounted for thus: The church was situated at the extremity of the parish, and it was thought the people from the remoter districts would not come so great a distance to worship, unless they had the further inducement of being able to purchase such stores

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for their families as were not to be procured nearer their own dwellings. But Grimshaw knew that, unless he could secure an attention to the sanctity of the Sabbath, all his efforts to elevate the religious character of his parish would be in vain. A desperate disease required a stringent remedy, and obliged him to resort to measures which under other circumstances would not have been adopted, and could not be defended. It is the custom in many localities for the church-wardens to leave their pew in the course of the morning's service, and visit the public-houses, and the usual places of resort for the village-idlers, to know that there are no disorderly persons there lurking. Not contented with requiring these officers to do their duty, the incumbent was accustomed to leave the church himself, when the psalm before the sermon was sung; and if any were found wandering in the street, or lounging in the churchyard, they were driven before him into the house of God. It has been said that in this service the horsewhip was used, and that on some occasions he told the clerk to give out the 119th psalm, that he might have the longer time in which to prosecute his search; but this statement is probably a piece of irony, or a myth. John Newton relates, that a friend of his was passing a public-house in Haworth on the Lord's day, when his attention was attracted toward a number of persons who were making their escape from it; some by jumping out of the lower windows, and

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others by climbing over a wall. At first he was alarmed, supposing, from the hurry of their flight, that the house must be on fire; but, on inquiring the reason of the sudden rush, he found that it all arose from their having discovered the near approach of the parson. At another time, a man was passing the village on his way to call a doctor, who was required by a woman in her confinement, when his horse lost a shoe. On applying to the blacksmith to have his loss repaired, he was told that, as it was the Lord's day, the work could not be done, unless the minister granted leave: but when Grimshaw was asked to give permission, as he found that the case was one requiring haste, and justifying a departure from the usual course, he consented that the horse should be shod.

One great source of the evils by which his mind was pained, and by which the tone of morals was lowered among the villagers, was the gathering together on the Sabbath of young people of both sexes, where they were far away from the notice of those whose presence would be a check to their irregularities. The open moor, with its numerous dells, presented a temptation to the careless to seek in companies the free pleasantries of the hill-side, rather than the restraints of the house of God. Pitch and toss, and ruder games, were the attraction to the more reckless. But in recesses of this kind it is difficult to catch the delinquent, as the approach of the pursuer can be

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seen from afar, and a system was adopted of having scouts on the vigilant watch. The devoted pastor followed his misguided flock into these hiding-places of the wilderness, but was not always successful in his attempts at discovery. There was one spot more frequented than the rest, against which he often warned the young, but with little effect. Finding other methods without avail, and being determined to put down the evil, he one day disguised himself, and succeeded in approaching close to the wrongdoers before they could recognise that it was the parson. With the voice of affectionate authority, he charged them not to move. The command was obeyed; and, taking down the names of all present, in pencil, he told them to attend at his own house on a given day and hour. Not one dared to disobey the mandate, so great was the reverence with which even the most thoughtless regarded his character; and at the appointed time the parsonage was visited by a number of young people, subdued in their manner, but less staid and sober in their general bearing than the brotherhood who were usually seen approaching this honoured homestead. When all had assembled, they were led into a private room, formed into a circle, and ordered to kneel down. Their faithful pastor knelt down also, in the centre of the ring, and pleaded with much earnestness that their sin might be forgiven, and a better spirit infused into their hearts. The interview was

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concluded by a solemn appeal to the conscience of each individual, and a charge to all present to turn from the pursuit of folly, and walk in the way of piety and peace. It was not necessary to repeat the salutary admonition, or the stranger stratagem. The Sabbath was henceforth respected, and quietness and decorum took the place of irreverence and riot.

The village-feasts, or wakes, in this part of the country are times of great dissipation. There is often an outburst of evil after a long course of industry and sobriety, leaving the heart wounded by unavailing regret, the savings of the year having been dissipated in a day. The snares of Satan are many, baited with wonderful address to catch all classes of the unthoughtful; and, at the conclusion, as the traders take down their stalls, and the gamblers gather up their implements of deception, counting the gains they have made,—the evil spirits who have hurried on the passions of the people are summing up their list of ruined souls. To attack the foe in the hour of his triumph, and in the place of his greatest power, when all around was jest and jibe, must have been a work eminently congenial to the bold and buoyant spirit of Grimshaw. Accompanied by one or two lay preachers, he took his stand in some conspicuous place; his companions first addressed the crowds who assembled around them; and, when a considerable part of the afternoon

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had been thus occupied, his own admonitions were heard, piercing through the hum of many voices, or rising above the din of the juggler's drum; and proclaiming that all things out of Christ—the rough game, the gay dance, and the brimming bowl included—are but "vanity and vexation of spirit." This was "a feast of fat things" to the sober-minded and sincere; it was a protest against the sins that were committed at these gatherings, and a warning to the unwary; and it gave to the solitary dweller in the distant glen, or the lonely moor, an opportunity of hearing the truths of the Gospel proclaimed in simple phrase, but with convincing power.

There are two feasts at Haworth in the course of the year. When the brutality of the masses at this period is considered, and their supposed freedom, by the right of immemorial usage, from all restraint at these festive occasions, it is easy to imagine the sad and sinful doings over which the lord of misrule would then preside. They who desisted not when the persecuted preacher fell senseless on the ground, or when the waters into which they had cast him were perilling his life, would have little mercy on each other when their passions were roused in the fray; nor would they have much delicacy of speech when the ribald jest was shouted out with unholy daringness. The stern voice of the incumbent was soon heard among them, as, like one of the old prophets of Israel protesting

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against the idolatries of the tribes, he warned the people of the consequences of their iniquity. They listened to him with respect; but his words were as powerless as his own single breath would have been to drive away the mist of the mountain. Yet he knew where the power lay, when man resisted his appeals; and he turned away from earth to the mercy-seat of God.

The races had been the principal object of his indignant remonstrance. Supported at the expense of the publicans and a few of their richer patrons, they were the rallying-place for all classes of the lawless, and incentives to the most degrading deeds. Notwithstanding the expostulations of the servant of Christ, when the day came the horses were entered in the lists. The course was cleared, and the first of an expected multitude collected together to prepare for a day of excitement and mirth; but they were doomed to a lasting disappointment. There was an agency at work, on the full potency of which they had not reckoned. Grimshaw was on his knees in earnest prayer; and

> "God's hands or bound or open are,
> As Moses or Elijah prays."

A storm arose as the crowds were seen hastening along the various pathways that led from valley or village; rain came down in torrents; the race-course was forsaken of its occupants; and the

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horse and his rider were alike unable to appear upon the field. There was hope for the next day; but, when it arrived, the appalling frown was still upon the face of the sky; and on the third and last day its dark aspect was still unchanged, with the rain-tempest equally merciless. The simple record of the narrator of this event is significant: "There have been no races in the neighbourhood of Haworth from that time to the present day."

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CHAPTER VI.

THE WESLEYS.—PREACHING TOURS.—LETTERS.

It must have been grateful as the sudden appearance of an oasis to the wayworn wanderer in the arid desert, when the Wesleys first heard of the zeal of the clergyman at Haworth. On the 22d of October, 1746, the year following the introduction to Darney, Charles Wesley preached at Keighley, on "God so loved the world." There was the promise of a plentiful harvest. He then went on to Haworth, and saw its devoted pastor, whom he calls "a faithful minister of Christ." By this time Grimshaw was again married, but he and his wife were both ill, suffering from fever. The prayer of faith was offered up by his affectionate visiter, who found him "full of triumphant love,"—that God would be pleased to raise him up again, for the service of His church. Charles read prayers at Haworth, and expounded Isaiah xxxv.; but it does not appear in what place the service was held. All listened, many wept, and some received comfort. On his return, he exhorted "the steady Society at Keighley," and lay at an inn, where he slept, "in spite of the serenaders," who entertained his fellow-traveller till the morning.

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Three months afterwards, on the 22d of January, 1747, Charles again visited Haworth, where he preached in a large house, but too small to contain the congregation, and lodged at the parsonage. As he was not permitted to preach in the church, he told his host at parting that he had feared where no fear was needed; there being no law, "either of God or man," against his use of the pulpit. But Grimshaw's enemies had threatened him, and he had given way, though now heartily ashamed of the cowardly course he had taken. Charles then set out to visit "what were called William Darney's Societies," and preached on the same day at different places, morning, noon, and night, with much freedom.*

Not long afterwards the repentant minister had an opportunity of proving that his professions were sincere, as on the 1st of May John Wesley visited Haworth, and received permission to preach in the church, which he did, to a numerous congregation. On the following Monday, after visiting in the interval Halifax, Birstal, and other places, he began an examination of "those that are called W. D.'s Societies." This was at Darney's own "earnest request." In no part of England had he preached in a wilder region than that which was the scene of his labours for the next few days; and yet in none had he found spots of greater beauty. One place that he mentions, Widdup, is in the midst of an extensive

* Charles Wesley's Journal, by Thomas Jackson.

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moor, rising to the greatest elevation in this part of the country. At Stoneshawgate, on the verge of the same moor, as he was preaching to a large congregation, a long wall, built of loose stones, fell down, but so evenly and gently, that it caused no disturbance; and the only difference was, that the people then sat at the bottom of it instead of on the top. At Todmorden Edge he addressed the people on "the brow of a long chain of mountains," and then entered the fruitful valley of Rosendale.*

Writing on the 30th of the same month to Wesley, Grimshaw says, "The Societies you formed in William Darney's Circuit are in a good state." As to those near Todmorden he could speak from personal observation, as he had visited them, and had observed a general disposition in all sorts of people to hear the Gospel. He "exhorted" twice on the day of his visit, and would not have it called preaching. Great must have been the difference between his present proceedings and his earlier ministrations in the same town. Then he was the gay clergyman, applauded but despised, the church his place for the dull performance of duty; now he was the earnest preacher, ridiculed but respected, the house or the hill-side the scene of his affecting appeals to the conscience. To some who came later he gave a third exhortation. The next day

* Wesley's Journal.

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he preached at Stoneshawgate, and on his way home he was met at a friend's house by "a great multitude." The house was unable to contain so large a number of attendants; and about one-third, if not more, stood out of doors, as he addressed them, for the convenience of all, from the threshold. For nearly an hour and a half the Lord gave him great freedom and power, and his congregation was attentive, serious, and civil.*

He further adds, in the same letter, that on returning home, there awaited him a request from a clergyman in Rosendale, probably the Rev. J. Milner, that he would preach in his chapel on the following day. With this invitation he intended to comply, and setting out on the day in which he wrote, to walk to the place, about fourteen miles distant, accompanied by a friend. His letter commences thus: "I hope this will find you in good health, and at hard but happy-making labour. O, may the Lord give you sufficient strength of soul and body, as well as find you full employment in His vineyard, to the end!" And it concludes thus: "I hope you meet with all things well wherever you come. You will not fail to present my tender respects to your brother: the same I desire to all the sincere servants and seekers of the blessed Jesus, your Redeemer and mine. O, may we be kept faithful to Him to the end! May we ever go forth in His strength, incessantly making mention,

* Myles's "Life of Grimshaw."

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yea, loudly proclaiming, His righteousness only: indefatigably labouring to glorify Him in our hearts, lips, and lives, which are His; and continually endeavouring to bring innumerable sons and daughters to glory by Him. This week two members of our Society, a married man and woman, are gone to rest with this precious Lord. Blessed be His name! To Him I heartily commend you and yours. Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus, be with you." He signs himself, "Your unworthy but affectionate younger brother, W. G."

On the 20th of August he addressed to Wesley another letter, full of the same affection, in which he says: "Wherever these lines find you, may they find you full of the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind; fighting, in the strength of our Lord, the good fight of faith; pulling down the strong-holds of Satan, and industriously labouring to deliver multitudes of poor sin-enslaved souls out of the kingdom of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God! Such success let us daily and heartily beseech our dear Redeemer to bless all His faithful ministers with, wherever He sends them.—You will desire to know how I do. O, dear Sir, hearty and happy in the Lord. And how my ministry, or rather the present state of my parish: Blessed be God, flourishing still more and more. Our Societies are, in general, very lively in the Lord; and several others, though not as yet joined in Society, are nevertheless come to

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a sense of the pardoning love of God. Others are under deep concern, or eagerly hungering and thirsting after our dear Redeemer. Two under my own roof are just now under deep conviction; one, a girl about eighteen years old, and the other, a boy about fourteen; and, I hope, my own little girl, between ten and eleven years old. It is near six months since she first began to show a serious concern for her sinful state."

At this time, Grimshaw was in the full vigour of manhood, and his zeal for God had reached its highest manifestation. The varied forms of the labour he now undertook are thus described by himself:*—"The method which I, the least and most unworthy of my Lord's ministers, take in my parish, is this: I preach the Gospel, glad tidings of salvation, to penitent sinners, through faith in Christ's blood only, twice every day the year round (save when I expound the Church Catechism and Thirty-nine Articles, or read the Homilies; which, in substance, I think my duty to do in some part of the year annually on the Lord's-day mornings). I have found this practice, I bless God, of inexpressible benefit to my congregation, which consists, especially in the summer season, of perhaps ten or twelve hundred; or, as some think, many more souls. We have also prayers, and a chapter expounded, every Lord's-day evening. I visit my parish, in twelve several places, monthly; convening six, eight, or

* Arminian (Methodist) Magazine for 1778, p. 474.

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ten families in each place, allowing any people of the neighbouring parishes that please to attend that exhortation. This I call my monthly visitation. I am now entering into the fifth year of it, and wonderfully has the Lord blessed it. The only thing more are our funeral expositions and exhortations, and visiting our Societies in one or other of the last three days of the month. This I purpose, through the grace of God, to make my constant business in my parish so long as I live."

Other parishes beside his own had been visited, but the offence taken thereat by the clergy almost made him resolve to sally out no more to distant places; until one day a powerful impression rested upon his mind, which continued with oppressive weight for several hours, that it was his duty to preach the Gospel in other places, and leave the event to the Lord. The first thing suggested to him was to visit Darney's Societies; which having done, he struck out into Lancashire and Cheshire, accompanied by John Bennet, an evangelist of the same class as Darney. They visited the Societies at Rochdale, Manchester, and Holme, in Lancashire; and at Booth-Bank, in Cheshire. At Tarvin, near Chester, they met with a clergyman, Carmichael, who had received the remission of sins in the previous year. By the way of Booth-Bank they returned to Manchester, and visited the Society a second time.

Booth-Bank is in the parish of Rosthern, and

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the service was there held in the house of John and Alice Cross.* Alice was a woman of great spirit and intrepidity, and a heroine for Christ. Her husband was "a quiet sober man," but for some time after her conversion he remained in the old way, walking upon the deceptive sand. When going out to worship, with her straw hat in one hand and the latch of the door in the other, she would say to him, "John Cross, wilt thou go to heaven with me? If thou wilt not, I am determined not to go to hell with thee." John yielded at last to her good sense and strong appeals: a pulpit was fixed in the largest room of their house; and the messengers of God were made welcome to their fare and farm. When beggars came to the door, she told them of the riches that are in Christ Jesus, and, kneeling by their side, commended them to the grace of God; and then sent them away, grateful for her charity, and impressed by her earnestness in seeking their souls' good. Nor were the more honourable of the land beyond the reach of her reproofs. On one occasion, she stopped the Cheshire hunt, when passing her house, and addressed the horsemen,—especially the then Earl of Stamford, and Sir Harry Manwaring,—who listened to her warning, "and rode on." When the expected preacher did not come, though the pulpit was left unoccupied, the congregation was not dismissed without manna; as Alice, in her simple

* Methodist Magazine for 1843, p. 26.

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and earnest way, dealt out the bread of life; and strict indeed would be the discipline that could have prevented her from thus standing before the people as the almoner of heaven. She was remarkable for her comeliness, "never wearing a border upon her cap, which was made of linen, pinned in a plait upon her forehead, and tied under her chin." John Pawson says, she more nearly resembled "one who had come from the happy world of spirits" than any other woman he ever saw. She had one of those strongly-marked characters which the novelist seizes upon with avidity; and which, by receiving from him an appropriate drapery, and a striking name, become household words, as well known as the names of real history. The conversation between William Grimshaw and Alice Cross, when they sat together by the fire-side, with honest John nodding sleepily at intervals, tired by his day's work in the farm, could it have been recorded, would have read like a chapter in the immortal Dream.

After parting from Bennet at Manchester, Grimshaw spent two days with Darney's Societies in Todmorden, Shore, Mellor Barn, Rosendale, Cross Stone, Stoneshawgate, and Crimsworth-Dean. Everywhere the Lord was manifestly with him. Great blessings were scattered; and much zeal and love, with great humility and simplicity, appeared among the people. The whole journey occupied nearly five days.

In the result of this tour he had great satis-

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faction; and he says, in reviewing it, that it was a blessed one to his soul. He now began to see, in some degree, into God's design in giving him the deep impression that had been made upon his mind. He determined to add, by the Divine assistance, to the care of his own parish, as frequent a visitation of the more distant Societies as their circumstances might require, or his convenience permit; and, if it should appear to be the will of God that he was to launch out still further, he was ready to obey, as he felt that he could never do enough in gratitude and love to God "for the least mite of His blessings."

It was his wish, in all these things, to act in entire conformity with the arrangements of Wesley, as it was one end that both these unwearied watchmen had in view. "O, dear Sir," he writes, "that I may prove faithful and indefatigable in His vineyard; that I may persevere to the last gasp, steadfast, immoveable, and always abounding in His work! Do you pray—the same shall be mine for you, your dear brother, and all our fellow-labourers. What I purpose concerning surveying the Societies, as I have great reason to believe it is the Lord's will, from the freedom I feel thereto in my heart, so I question not but it will be agreeable to your conception of it. I desire to do nothing but in perfect harmony and concert with you, and therefore beg you will be entirely free, open, and

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communicative, to me. I bless God, I can discover no other at present, but every way a perfect agreement between your sentiments, principles, &c., of religion, and my own; and therefore desire that you will (as I do to you) from time to time lay before me such rules, places, proposals, &c., as you conceive mostly conducive to the welfare of the church, the private benefit of her members, and, in the whole, to the glory of the Lord. My pulpit, I hope, shall be always at yours and your brother's service; and my house, so long as I have one, your welcome home. The same I'll make it to all our fellow-labourers, through the grace of God." *

Towards the end of November, he again wrote to Wesley, asking for more labourers, as the harvest was great. The work had never prospered so much as at this time. He had recently visited the Societies at Leeds, Birstal, Todmorden, Rosendale, Heptonstall, and Pendle Forest, as well as those in his own parish; and he reports of them that they are "very hearty." Multitudes on all sides, who had been enemies, ran eagerly to hear the Gospel. New and numerous classes had been lately joined. With Bennet, John Nelson, and Thomas Colbeck he was "cordially united in carrying on the work of the Lord; believing, and professing, and preaching, one thing—JESUS and HIM CRUCIFIED."

* Arminian (Methodist) Magazine, for 1778, p. 47.

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It was not always by request, or even by permission, that he was introduced into the neighbouring localities. The methods he took to secure his end were sometimes singular in their character, but they were in unison with his own daring spirit, and with the circumstances of the people. There was a respectable man from Dean Head, in Lancashire, who frequently attended his ministry at Haworth, but whom he knew only by name. One day, after he had concluded the service, he surprised his hearer by saying, "I shall preach at Mr. Clegg's house on Tuesday next." The appointment was kept; Clegg and his wife were both awakened, and soon found peace; and a flourishing Society was established at Dean Head.

But Grimshaw was called upon to pause in his laborious career, by murmurs of dissatisfaction, that threatened for a time to limit the circle of his usefulness.

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CHAPTER VII.

PERSECUTION.—GEORGE WHITE, CURATE OF COLNE.—HIS SERMON AGAINST THE METHODISTS.—GRIMSHAW'S REPLY.

THE clergy were on the watch, that, if any fault were committed by the man whose zeal was so great a reflection on their own supineness, he might be restrained from pursuing his earnest course. When it was found that he could not be silenced by legal process, some of his opponents determined that it should be done by a more summary method. The Rev. George White, perpetual curate of Colne and Marsden, was one of the most determined of the enemies of the Methodists, and published a sermon against them, of which the following is the singular title: "A Sermon against the Methodists, preached at Colne and Marsden, in the county of Lancaster, to a very numerous Audience; at Colne, July 24, and at Marsden, August 7, 1748. By George White, M.A., Minister of Colne and Marsden, and Author of 'Mercurius Latinus.' Published at the Request of the Audience. Preston: Printed for the Author, by James Stanley and John Moon; and sold by W. Owen, near the

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Temple Bar, London, and the Booksellers of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, and the Bishoprick of Durham:" 8vo. pp. 24. It was founded on 1 Cor. xiv. 33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." It was professedly intended, "First, to point out such practices as create a shameful confusion among us, and are directly contrary to peace, and the decent customs of all the churches of the faithful. And, Secondly, to mention such persuasive inferences, or obligations, as may possibly, for the future, prevent the said confusion, and many other notorious consequences." The Methodist preachers were charged, by this watchful guardian of order and truth, with being "authors of confusion, open destroyers of the public peace, flying in the face of the very Church they may craftily pretend to follow, occasioning many bold insurrections, which threaten our spiritual government; schismatical rebels against the best of churches; authors of a farther breach into our unhappy divisions; contemners of the great command, 'Six days shalt thou labour,' &c.; defiers of all laws, civil and ecclesiastical; professed disrespecters of learning and education, causing a visible ruin of your trade and manufactures; and, in short, promoters of a shameful progress of enthusiasm and confusion, not to be paralleled in any other Christian dominion."

"*Bambalio, clangor, stridor, taratantara, mur-*

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mur!" says Grimshaw, after quoting, in the reply he wrote, this abusive paragraph. We learn also, from the same authority, that the Sermon was accompanied by the issuing of a "Proclamation" for enlisting men into the mob raised against the Methodists, which ran in words to the following effect:—

"Notice is hereby given, that if any men be mindful to enlist into His Majesty's service, under the command of the Rev. Mr. George White, Commander in Chief, and John Banister, Lieut.-General of His Majesty's forces, for the defence of the Church of England, and the support of the Manufactory in and about Colne, both which are now in danger, &c., &c.; let them now repair to the Drum-head at the Cross, where each man shall have a pint of ale for advance, and other proper encouragements."

This was the uplifting of the fiery brand, and the gathering together of the excited vassals soon followed.

On the 24th of August, John Wesley preached at Haworth, to more than the church could contain. It was again filled the next morning, at the early hour of five. Accompanied by Grimshaw, and his friend and fellow-labourer, Thomas Colbeck, he then rode to Rough Lee. On their way they were met by a number of friends, who stopped them again and again, and entreated, with much earnestness, that they would not

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proceed, as a large mob from Colne was coming to oppose them. With his usual tact, Wesley saw his opportunity; and, urging his companions to follow him at greater speed, he arrived at the appointed place before his opponents, and found all quiet. At half-past twelve he began to preach; but, when he was in the midst of his sermon, the drunken rabble came down the hill like a torrent, with threatening and tumult, and armed with clubs and staves. They were headed by one who called himself a deputy-constable, and said he must bring the preacher before the clergyman of the parish. Wesley consented to accompany him, that a riot might be prevented; but they had not proceeded more than ten yards, when a man struck him in the face with all his might, and another threw a stick at his head. There was then a pause, when another of the band, cursing and swearing in the most horrid manner, and flourishing a club over his head, cried out, "Bring him away!" A drummer went before, gathering the rabble together from all sides by his noise, as they proceeded onward towards Barrowford. After entering the house where White was to receive them, the deputy allowed Grimshaw and Colbeck to accompany his prisoner, and said that no one should be permitted to hurt him. The "commander in chief" and his friends required him to promise that he would not again come to Rough Lee: but his reply was, that he would sooner cut

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off his hand than do so; nor would he make any similar promise, though strongly urged, relative to his friends. Once he attempted to retire with the deputy, but the mob instantly followed, with curses, oaths, and stones. One of them beat him to the ground; and, when he rose again, the whole body came about him, like lions, and forced him back into the house. From one to between three and four o'clock he tried to reason with White, who could not be kept to any one point, but talked ramblingly. One said, "No: we will not be like Gamaliel, we will proceed like the Jews." After a long contention, Wesley so far yielded as to say, "I will not preach at Rough Lee at this time." White then undertook to quiet the mob, and, when he had spoken a few words to them, their noise ceased. As Wesley and he walked out together at one door, Grimshaw and Colbeck went out at the other; but the mob closed in upon them, and tossed them about with great violence, throwing Grimshaw down, and covering both of them with mire, there being no one to come to the rescue. The people who had assembled to hear the word of God were treated with even greater cruelty. They had to run for their lives, amidst showers of dirt and stones, and no regard was paid to either sex or age. Some were trampled in the mire; others dragged by the hair; and many were unmercifully beat with clubs. One was forced to leap from a rock, ten or twelve feet

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high, into the river; otherwise they would have thrown him in headlong. When he crawled out, wet and bruised, they swore they would throw him in again, and were with difficulty prevented from executing their threat. White, well-pleased, was watching his mad myrmidons all this time, without a word to stay them; and his deputy continued to urge them on in their barbarous deed. Wesley had some fear for Grimshaw, as this was apparently his first facing of the mob; but he knew not the granite strength of his friend's heart: he was "ready to go to prison or death for Christ's sake." There were still several parties upon the hills, as they retired towards Widdup in the evening; and it was only by fast riding they escaped from being again intercepted. One brother, who was overtaken, was knocked down, and got away with difficulty.

These particulars are taken from a letter written by Wesley the next morning from Widdup, and addressed to White.* He appears to have been more than usually moved by the treatment he received from this wild Lancashire mob; but his principal source of regret was, that a clergyman of his own Church was at the head of the attack. "And all this time," he says, "you was talking of justice and law. Alas! sir, suppose we were Dissenters, (which I deny,) suppose we were Jews or Turks, are we not to have the benefit of the

* Wesley's Journal.

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laws of our country? Proceed against us by the law, if you can or dare; but not by lawless violence; not by making a drunken, cursing, swearing, riotous mob both judge, jury, and executioner. This is flat rebellion against God and the King, as you may possibly find to your cost."

On the evening of the day following the scene at Rough Lee, there was a fine contrast to its agitation and storm. "I preached," says Wesley, "till near an hour after sunset. The calmness of the evening agreed well with the seriousness of the people; every one of whom seemed to drink in the word of God as a thirsty land the refreshing showers." This was at Midgley, on the summit of the hill immediately above Ewood, whence Grimshaw married his first wife, and where he must occasionally have resided about this period, from the number of his letters dated from this place. The house is near the site of the ancient mansion of the Farrars, to which Robert Farrar, bishop of St. David's, is said to have belonged, who was burnt as a Protestant martyr at Carmarthen in 1555. It was more recently used by Dr. John Fawcett as a seminary, at which William Ward was educated, the associate of Carey and Marshman in their noble efforts to evangelize India. On the same range of hills John Foster was born, and he here received some assistance in his studies.

The rough reception met with by Grimshaw

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from the curate of Colne did not deter him from again entering that neglected parish. Accompanied by Ingham and one of his preachers, Batty, he once more visited the same neighbourhood. The Inghamites had been there previously, and had formed a small Society. After the service had commenced, White rushed furiously into the house, with a staff in his hand, attended by his valiant constable and his marshalled mob. He would have struck Batty, but the blow was warded off by Ingham. The preachers retired into an adjoining room; but White threatened the master of the house with the stocks, and drove the congregation away. He also insisted that Ingham and Grimshaw should sign a paper, promising, under the penalty of £50, not to preach in the parish for a whole year. As they refused compliance with this unauthorized request, they were taken by the rioters towards Colne. The mob, now seeing that their first demand would be sternly resisted, lowered their tone, and would accept of a truce for six months, or even for two; and at last would have been contented with their word of promise, without the exaction of any penalty. But the servants of the Lord were still firm to their purpose, though they were dragged violently along the road, clubs were shaken over their heads, and they were pelted with mud and dirt. Ingham's coat was torn in the affray, and hung on the ground. They were conducted to the Swan inn, and kept

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there until it was White's pleasure they should be dismissed.*

At Keighley, under the care of the Wesleyan superintendent minister, is the original Cash-Book of the Societies in this neighbourhood, many of the earlier entries being in Grimshaw's own hand-writing. The first entry relates to a Quarterly Meeting of leaders, held at Todmorden Edge, October 18, 1748, which is the first meeting of this kind upon record. One of their resolutions is, "that if any dispute arise touching the choosing of a steward or stewards, the greater number of voices shall have the choice to elect a fresh steward: this shall be mentioned to our minister, Mr. John Wesley, or his successor, who shall end any dispute of this kind." The Societies in connexion with Rough Lee must have been extensive, as there are contributions from six leaders at that place; viz., Alice Dyson, Bernard Dyson, James Varley, Edward Holt, Thomas Laycock, and James Hunter. The amount contributed from Rough Lee is £1. 4*s.* 7*d.*; the other places being Todmorden, with six leaders, £1. 1*s.* 11½*d.*; Heptonstall, with ten leaders, £2. 3*s.* 9½*d.*; Rosendale, with six leaders, £1. 11*s.* 4½*d.*; and Rochdale, with one leader, 3*s.* 6*d.* Total £6. 5*s.* 2½*d.* The sum of 15*s.* 2½*d.* had been disbursed at Rough Lee, but for what purpose we are not told, as the only

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, cap. xv.

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entry is, "Charges as per bill." The balance, amounting to 1*s.* 7*d.*, was given to William Darney. It would be with a grateful heart that Grimshaw afterwards entered, from time to time, the contributions from a place where he and his associates had met with so much persecution.

The sermon preached by White was afterwards published, with an "Epistle Dedicatory to his Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury," and was dated from Colne, November 7, 1748. White had been educated at Douay, for the Romish priesthood; and, upon his recantation, he was recommended for preferment to the vicar of Whalley, by Archbishop Potter. He had previously published,—a Sermon, preached at Durham, against Popery and Presbyterianism; a Burlesque Poem against the Veneration of Reliques; another Poem on the High Mass; and a Newspaper, called the Mercurius Latinus, which reached 31 numbers. He frequently abandoned his parish for weeks together, and on one occasion is said to have read the funeral service more than twenty times in a single night, over the dead bodies that had been interred in his absence. After one of these maudlin outbreaks he brought home Madame Helen Maria Piarza, an Italian, whom he married at Marsden. But soon afterwards he was torn away from his bride by being imprisoned for debt.*

* Whitaker's "History of the Parish of Whalley."

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In the following year, 1749, a Reply was published by Grimshaw, called "An Answer to a Sermon lately published against the Methodists by the Rev. George White, A.M., Minister of Colne and Marsden, in Lancashire. By Mr. William Grimshaw, B.A., Minister of Haworth, in Yorkshire. Psalm lii. 1—6. *Semper ego auditor tantum? Nunquamne reponam?* Juv."

By the virulence of White's tongue, and the force of his hands, multiplied in proportion to the numbers of the mob he collected, Grimshaw had been repeatedly silenced; but he was more than a match for his adversary in the use of the pen. The attack of White was like the "pawse" of the Lancashire loons who were in his service, rude and ruthless; nor was the defence conducted with the gentleness of a carpet-knight. The knotted club of the mountain was uplifted; but its heavy strokes were needed, as blows less earnest would not have been felt by the potulent priest. The Reply extends to eighty-six pages, 12mo., closely printed, and is given without abridgment by Myles. In the first page we have this sentence: "The very tinkers and colliers of your parish have of late acted the parson as well as you have done, and with as much regard to truth and the honour of God." "The reasons that have induced me," says the writer, "to answer your sermon, though otherwise not worth answering, are chiefly these:—a just and ingenuous vindication of the principles and proceedings of those

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people whom you have endeavoured so industriously to traduce and vilify; likewise the conviction of such, who, as common enemies of all true religion, or the very appearance of it, are prone enough to swallow down anything that may tend to the detriment of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the scandal, misrepresentation, and prejudice of its avowed and faithful friends; and, lastly, for the encouragement of those that are about [to embrace], and the confirmation of those that already have embraced, the principles of the Methodists,—despicable, indeed, upon their account and name, but, nevertheless, to every sincere inquirer after truth and happiness, evidently, and every way, agreeable to the Gospel of our Lord, and, consequently, to the principles of our Established Church; nor in anywise, that I can find, materially different from those of any denomination of our Dissenting brethren."

After noticing the kind of confusion to which the apostle alludes in the passage chosen by White for his text, and acknowledging the necessity for the maintenance of order in the church, he thus proceeds: "These disorders (among the primitive professors), of no small consequence, seem to me to be the occasion of the text, 'God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.' God, that is to say, will by no means warrant such irregularities in the church. Now, which way the occasion of the text, and the

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conduct of the Methodists, can be brought, without violence, to tally, I see not; except they be guilty of the same, or the like disorders. Doth one of their teachers sing psalms, and another pray, in your church, while you are preaching? Or, do they start up, two or three at once, and preach there? Or, do you hear that they do any such things in their own meetings? To bring this case home, then, to the call of these Methodist preachers, *who* must judge whether theirs be of God? Not you, I think. Mind, sir, the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. Your sermon and late conduct demonstrate that you are void of such a discerning spirit. The Methodist preachers, therefore, may be right in this respect also, for aught you can object; and the text as far from making against them in this view, as the other."

As to the charge of pretending to ministerial powers, he says: "The text can have nothing in this light against the Methodist preachers, for want of an outward qualification to preach; nor does it make such the authors of confusion in the church, on that account, at this day. I am afraid it will appear you are but too like many a priest more, who, so soon as they have taken their text, fall on to quite another subject, and never own it more so long as they stay in the pulpit." We have then an account of "the Methodists' notions, or principles, and doctrines," in reply to the charge that they had introduced "a

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system of uncommon notions, ignorance, and superstition."

The inferences drawn by the Methodists from their doctrine concerning faith are thus enumerated:—

"1st. That true Christian faith, properly so called, is not to be obtained by any human means, but the mere gift of God, and an operation of the Holy Ghost in our hearts.

"2dly. That by this faith only we are justified, or pardoned all our sins, born again, or regenerated, united to Christ, made thereby the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life.

"3dly. That this faith is the root, in consequence, from whence true sanctification of life proceeds.

"4thly. That no man, how religiously soever he might live before, knows what a Christian life is, till he has received this faith, and thereby knows and feels that his sins are forgiven him.

"5thly. That as by this faith a man receives and experiences the remission of his sins, and can safely, for the first time, call himself a Christian; so he then begins to discover, in reality, what he but erroneously imagined himself to know before; namely, the exceeding great love of God the Father towards us through Christ Jesus our Saviour; and that from hence also arises that one only, true, reciprocal, superlative love of us to God again, which necessarily

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begets in us a life of universal, inward, and outward holiness.

"And, 6thly, and lastly. That though in charity we ought to hope, from a man's outwardly virtuous conversation, that his state may be truly Christian; or another man, upon the same appearance of behaviour, may hope the same of us; yet an affirmative answer to this blunt but plain question is nevertheless needful: Do you know your sins are forgiven you? Have you peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? Have you no condemnation, as being in Christ Jesus? Know you that Jesus Christ is in you? These are, in a manner, scriptural queries. (Prov. xvi. 1.) And the apostle's injunction is, that we should be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. (1 Peter iii. 15.) Such a positive reply alone can confirm his opinion of us: for all our outward sanctity can be no certainty to another man, that we are real Christians; so far from that, that we are therewith but too often deceived ourselves."

"The faith of a true convict or penitent," he says again, "appears three ways;—1st, In that Christ can; 2dly, That Christ will; and, lastly, That Christ hath forgiven him. These are the steps, if I may so speak, whereby this faith advances toward the Saviour."

It would, however, be more correct to say, that the last act of faith is the work of the believer,

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rather than of the mere convict, however earnest his cry for deliverance. The faith of the true penitent when seeking mercy, is not that "Christ *hath* forgiven him," but rather that God is ready to pardon his sin, at the present moment, for the sake of the atonement made by Jesus Christ; with an apprehension of the merits of Christ, and a recumbency upon Him alone for the salvation of the soul. We know that we are forgiven, by the witness of the Holy Spirit, which is the evidence of acceptance that every seeking sinner is to look for from God. It is on the reception of this that we become regenerate, and are enabled to love God, and keep His commandments. The instruction sometimes given to the penitent, "Believe that you are saved, and you *are* saved," is highly objectionable, and causes great perplexity. The words of Scripture are, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The order of sequence in the exercise of faith, as well as the meritorious cause of salvation, is to be kept in view when the stricken spirit seeks the healing balm that alone can cure the wound made by the hand of God.

The *argumentum ad hominem* is used with telling force by Grimshaw: "You proceed, 'If we take a survey of the different constitutions and establishments of life, we shall find that order and regularity are necessary to their essential preservation, &c.' This is granted in

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your introduction; and God forbid that this should be denied or interrupted in the economy of the church. But how does it appear that the Methodists even so much as attempt any such thing, or that their principles or practices have, in anywise, any such tendency? Their teachers intermeddle not in the administration of the sacraments: they neither disturb you nor any man, that I ever heard of, in your ministerial function: so far from this, that, contrariwise, they are exceeding good subs to us, if we have but grace to see and acknowledge it. I believe, if we will but speak the truth, as we hope to answer for it at the day of judgment, we must own, that they have, through the Divine assistance, who sends by whom He will send, wrought a greater reformation in our parishes than we have done. Ah, sir, you little know, but I pray God make you sensible, and thankful for it too, before you die, how these dear servants of the Lord laboured night and day for you, without a penny from your purse, whilst you boarded at Chester Castle, and for three years together since, whilst you have been raking about in London, and up and down the country. And now, at your return to your flock, do you find that any amongst them, that follow these good men, who deserve so well at our hands, behave disorderly at church? Do they live dishonestly or unpeaceably among their neighbours? Or do they wrong or defraud you, or any man, of their dues? Surely

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men of their principles will do no such things, nor occasion any such confusion, as your merciless spirit would brand them with. On the contrary, your own late riotous conduct, heading a lawless rabble of irreligious, dissolute wretches, under the name and title of Commander-in-Chief, spiriting them up to the perpetration of many grievous outrages, and inhumanly treating and abusing numbers of poor, inoffensive people; I must say, this is a far more shameful violation of order, in both Church and State; done, too, under a zeal for religion, and in defence of the Church of England!"

The Methodist preachers were neglected by the clergy as "subs;" but in the order of God's Providence they have been raised to a parity of spiritual influence; and the verity of their high commission is testified in both hemispheres, by millions of saved souls. They wish to be allies, and not antagonists, to the Church of their fathers, so long as it maintains the simplicity of the truth, and is faithful in its resistance to Romanism, within as well as without its own pale.

The charge, that "industrious trade, in consequence of so many constant attendances on their new model of worshipping the Creator, will become an idle concern," was calculated to produce a strong impression on the minds of a manufacturing population. But the reply was ready, and of convincing power: "Sir, I make

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the following appeal to your own conscience, whether you do not believe that trade receives more obstruction and real detriment, in one week, from numbers that run a-hunting; from numbers more, that allow themselves in various idle diversions, an hour, two, or sometimes three daily, for what is vulgarly called a 'Noon-sit;' and from many yet more, who loiter away their precious time, on a market-day in your own town, in drunkenness, janglings, and divers frivolous matters, than from all that give the constantest attendance to this new model of worship, in the space of two or three months. Admitting these people are in an error, is not their conduct, rather than that of those others, likely to bring a blessing to your trade? But supposing that this model of worship, so contemptible in your eye, be truly Christian, as I hope is evidently proved before, and consequently altogether agreeable to the will of God; must not its devotees be those only, in whose hands, by whose means, and for whose sakes, God will prosper it?"

"Thus much in answer to your sermon," is the conclusion of the reply. "If anything may seem to be spoken with too much warmth, impute it not to anger, or want in anywise of charity and benevolence, but to well-meant zeal for the truth as it is in Jesus, and its votaries. If you will not, you are welcome to do as you please." "A few general observations upon Methodism, and a word of exhortation to all sorts of people," are

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appended; and the pen is then flung down, never again to be resumed for any work of greater length than a sermon, a pastoral, or a letter. We can readily believe the author when he says, "I have as little leisure for writing as for anything I do." It is a strong proof of his great affection for the Methodists, that he was willing to remain as the chained eagle for so long a time as would be required for the writing of this Reply; but when the work was completed, he at once plumed his wing for another far flight; the moor was again crossed; the music around him was once more that of the mountain-stream; and the cry from his eyrie, telling of God's mercy and grace, was answered by the echo of many voices seeking the salvation of the soul.

White died at Langroyd, April 29, 1751. The following year Wesley had "a large, serious, and quiet congregation" at the place of his former contest. "There have been no tumults here," he says, "since Mr. White was removed. It was his manner first to hire, and then to head the mob, when they and he were tolerably drunk. But he drank himself, first into a gaol, and then into his grave." It was believed in the neighbourhood, according to Newton, that, when on his death-bed, he sent for Grimshaw, and expressed his concern for the part he had taken in the outbreaks at Rough Lee.

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CHAPTER VIII.

KINGSWOOD.—LORD HUNTINGDON.—WHITEFIELD AT HAWORTH.—BRADFORD.—INDENTURE.—CHARLES WESLEY.—JOHN BENNET.—OSMOTHERLEY.

On the 30th of July, 1749, Grimshaw was at Kingswood, near Bristol. He had probably gone thither to take his children to the school established by Wesley. Myles says that both his children were educated at this institution. It was not then confined, as now, to sons of Wesleyan ministers. John Wesley says, "Mr. Grimshaw assisted my brother and me at Kingswood;" and Charles, "Our worthy brother Grimshaw assisted at Kingswood, and partook of our feast." The two brothers had this week an interview with Whitefield and Howel Harris, which "came to nought." No further particulars or explanations are given, and we have no evidence that Grimshaw's visit had any reference to this interview. As Charles and his wife were riding to this meeting over Hounslow Heath, a highwayman crossed the road and took no notice of them, though he robbed all the coaches and passengers that came after them in the same path.*

* Charles Wesley's Journal, by Thomas Jackson.

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Not far from Pontefract is Ledston Hall, at that time in the possession of the Earls of Huntingdon. When it was visited by the Countess, after her consecration to the work of the Lord, and by Lady Margaret Hastings, these devoted ladies there gathered around them the servants of God who were most active in the spread of the truth at that period, and Grimshaw was among the most welcome of the guests. On one of these visits he had a conversation with Lord Huntingdon, son of the Countess, who had imbibed infidel principles from associating with Chesterfield and Bolingbroke. Some time previously, his lordship had had a dispute with two eminent clergymen, but they had failed to convince him of his error. When he wished to draw Grimshaw into a passage at arms, he declined the contest, and frankly said, "My lord, if you needed information, I would gladly do my utmost to assist you; but the fault is not in your head, but in your heart, which can only be reached by a Divine power. I shall pray for you, but I cannot dispute with you." His lordship afterwards said, that he was more impressed by the honesty and firmness of these simple words, than by all the arguments he had heard. But he would not again encounter so free a censor; and it is to be feared he died in the same principles, as the only consolation a friend could give Lady Huntingdon, in an interview after his death, was, that the greatest sinners may

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possibly find mercy through the discipline of future punishment!*

In September, Whitefield preached thrice at Haworth. In the churchyard there were about six thousand hearers, and in the church above a thousand communicants. He says of the sacramental season, that it was "most awful." Here he met with William Darney, who soon afterwards was imprisoned for preaching. He describes him as "seemingly unqualified," but acknowledges that many dated their first awakening from the time of hearing him. In October of the same year he preached to many thousands at Ewood, Halifax, and Rosendale. At Ewood a temporary booth was erected in a field, for the accommodation of the ministers who attended. The meadow and the woodland above were crowded with people collected from all the surrounding places. There was an unusual solemnity upon the minds of the auditors; and, as the situation commands one of the most imposing prospects in Great Britain, when the doxology was sung at the close of the service, and the volume of sound, as the voice of the forest shaken by the winds, rolled along the vale below, the effect is said to have been indescribable. In the following year, when Whitefield again visited Haworth, the church was almost thrice filled with communicants.†

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, cap. xxvi.

† Whitefield's Letters.

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It was the custom at this time, when any of the more popular of the clergy visited Haworth, to read prayers in the church, and then adjourn to the churchyard, where a platform was erected, from which the minister addressed the multitude. Though the village is at a distance from any large town, the numbers who attended to hear the word of life were scarcely exceeded at any other place; and in few localities was the scene more imposing or solemn. With the play of the sunbeam upon the grey church-tower, and its gleam upon the surrounding hills; the sugh of the wind as it swept over the far-extending moor; the presence of the dead beneath, upon whose tombs was the tread of weary feet; the earnest multitude, many of them in an agony of spirit for the forgiveness of their sins; the voice of the minister, attuned to the task of speaking in the open air, whether on the mountain-side, or in the crowded street amidst ridicule and clamour; and the hymn of praise, that rose in loud chorus from every part of the crowded area; —the effect must have been overpowering, and the people would be slow to retire from so impressive a service. The men of Lancashire and Yorkshire forgot their old feuds, as they met together upon the border-hill, that they might offer a mutual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord of Hosts; the timid maiden and the venerable matron were there too, in honest russet or cloak of red, adding variety to

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the scene, and softness to the song of the multitude; and though at first the sod might be hurled, or some insulting word uttered about the preacher, this kind of opposition soon passed away, and there was respect and reverence. When the Lord's Supper was administered, it was sometimes necessary for the first congregation of communicants to retire from the church, and give way to others, who soon filled the sacred edifice; which course had to be repeated, until all had partaken of the feast. In one instance, when Whitefield was present, thirty-five bottles of wine were used in the ordinance. After the administration, or during its course, several addresses were delivered, at short intervals, with appropriate prayers and hymns.

On one of these occasions, when Whitefield was preaching, he saw a man on the top of the tower, to whom he cried, with his voice of thunder, "Man, I have a word for thee." This sudden address led to the man's conversion. At another visit, after taking his appointed position, he was observed to spend a few moments in silent prayer. He then looked round upon the thousand eyes that, bright with expectation, were all bent towards the scaffold upon which he stood; and, elevating his hands, he poured out his soul in earnest supplication that the power of the Holy Spirit might descend in its richest influence. The text was announced with solemnity,—"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after

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this the judgment." There was then a pause; but the silence was broken by a wild shriek of terror that arose from the midst of the mass. This was the cause of some confusion, but Whitefield exhorted the people to remain still; and, a few moments afterwards, Grimshaw was seen hastening towards him, and was heard to say, "Brother Whitefield, you stand among the dead and the dying—an immortal soul has been called into eternity; the destroying angel is passing over the congregation: cry aloud, and spare not!" It was then made known to the people that one of their number had been summoned before the bar of God. The text was again announced, and all listened, with awe-stricken countenances, as he repeated the words, with the emphasis of death upon his lips, "It is appointed unto men once to die." The Countess of Huntingdon and Lady Margaret Ingham were present; and from the spot near which they stood, a loud cry was again heard, and it was announced that another soul had fallen by the arrow of the destroyer. Each person there seemed then to think that the next call might be to himself, and listened as to the voice of his own doom. The eloquent Whitefield rose to the appalling grandeur of the occasion; there was a solemnity like that which sleeps in the darkened chamber when the struggle of the dying has commenced; and all hearts thrilled and heaved with an intense emotion, as the impenitent sinner was warned of the terribleness

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of his position, with the wrath of God abiding on him, and but a step between his soul and eternal death.*

The head of the parish, Bradford, was visited by the evangelists of Methodism at an early period. A Society was begun there by Wesley in 1747; but for some time after this there was no regular service. The members resorted to Birstal and Haworth to be fed with the word of life. In 1749 a Society was formed at Allerton, about two miles from Bradford, and another at Manningham, in its immediate suburb. Soon afterwards the town received frequent visits from Grimshaw, and regular preaching was established under his direction. It was generally in the open air that he stood, either in a vacant space on the water-side, or at the foot of the Church Bank.† The church was closed against him; and Wesley says, on a visit in the preceding year, "None behaved indecently but the curate of the parish."

There was much mercy in the spread of the Gospel within these districts at that particular period, by the only mode of agency that could have reached the neglected masses, and arrested their attention. It was not until the leaven of truth had begun to pervade the neighbourhood, and had produced a general influence upon the

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, cap. xvi.

† Stamp's "Wesleyan Methodism in Bradford."

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population, that the tide of immigration set in towards these towns, when the noise of the steam-engine was heard, and there was the whirl of the stately mill. An interesting conversation might be imagined between the venerable church-tower and the first tall chimney here upreared; representatives of the two great interests of the land. The slim upstart would be regarded with disdain by the broad old pile, and severe would be the denunciations against its presumption. But this jealousy is passing away. The mill listens silently to the chime of the Sabbath-bells; and the tower is content to be blackened by the smoke of its chimneys, if the swarms it sends forth on the week-day fill its aisles at the hour of Divine service, and bow at its communion-table.

At the beginning of the last century there was the utmost need for some moral power to be exerted, more forceful and persuasive than any that seemed then to exist. Of the neighbouring clergy too many were immoral in their character; the Nonconformists were comparatively feeble; and masses of men were yearly congregating around these localities in mightier numbers. There was no one to restrain their violence, calm their passion, or cheer their homes with the solace of worship and the radiance of religion. Had not Methodism, or some similar power, been sent to these restless races, the horrors of the French Revolution might have been repeated in England with fearfulness and atrocity. William Crabtree,

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who was born in 1720, and afterwards became a Baptist minister at Bradford, states that he was early put apprentice to a shalloon-weaver. Of the worsted-spinners he gives an awful account.* "I was boarded in a village," he says, "next door to hell itself; given to Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, and profane cursing and swearing." Out of every piece of weft a number of hanks were invariably stolen. To know the evils that were permitted to issue from those who ought to have been the guardians of truth, we have only to be reminded that at the same period Lawrence Sterne was pursuing his studies in the adjacent parish of Halifax. In a school there the master allowed his name—though he had been flogged by the usher for writing it—to remain upon the whitewashed wall, under the supposition that he would one day become a genius: and a genius he did become, but of wide-spread evil, in the utterly reprehensible works he published; the infamy of his private character being so great, that, when he went to preach in the cathedral at York, many of the congregation rose from their seats and went away.† As an instance of the ignorance then prevailing, we may observe that when Joseph Rhodes was preaching at Yeadon, a village about six miles from Bradford, in the open air, near the cottage of a man named Penetent, he frequently repeated the word "penitent"

* Mann's "Life of the Rev. William Crabtree."

† Quarterly Review, No. 188, 1854.

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in his address. At the conclusion, some of the congregation expressed their surprise that he should have said so much about "Old Penetent," and never once have mentioned his two sons, Jovan and Jozy (John and Joseph).* Had this been the expression of an individual, we might have ascribed it to imbecility of mind; but, as it was the wonderment of many, it was proof that the people neither read their Bibles nor went to church; or that if they did, it was not in a spirit of thoughtfulness and attention.

About the same period, Grimshaw visited Skircoat Green, near Halifax, to which Methodism had been brought by Alice Calverley, who had been impressed under the word of John Nelson, when preaching in William Shent's shop, at Leeds. To no one was this infant Society more indebted than to the evangelist of Haworth. The same care was bestowed by him upon the Society soon afterwards raised at Halifax. Not long ago it was remembered, by several of the older members in the vicinity, that he used to collect the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and preach to them, after their return home, when the work of the day was done. At Norland he was assisted in collecting the people by Joseph Boothroyd, who was greatly interested by his plain and homely style of addressing those who came to see the strange sight of a clergyman

* Rev. Charles Radcliffe, Methodist Magazine for 1839, p. 327.

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belonging to the Established Church preaching in a private house, and speaking to them as freely and familiarly as if he had been one of themselves. At the market-cross of Halifax John Riley, of Bradshaw, near Penistone, heard Wesley preach, and was brought under the power of the truth. Soon afterwards he invited Grimshaw to visit his village. There was a large attendance to hear the glad news of salvation; and as there were several large trees around Riley's residence, many of the young people availed themselves of their shelter, and, climbing into the branches, thence heard the voice of the preacher, and were yet screened from the observation of the rabble.* In the Stewards' Book at Keighley there are the following memoranda, in Grimshaw's handwriting:—"April 19th, 1749, lent the brethren at Halifax £1. 10*s.* 6*d.*" "July 11th, 1749, given to Halifax Society, towards defraying the law-charge, £1. 10*s.* 6*d.*" It is not known to what this charge refers; but the money had probably been expended in the defence of some persecuted preacher, or to protect the Society from insult and damage. The Society at Halifax, connected with which there are now three Ministers, and 1,158 members, was then too poor to repay this small sum.

Haworth was one of the twenty Circuits in England, the names of which appear in the

* Walker's "Wesleyan Methodism in Halifax."

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Minutes of Conference for the year 1749. In the same year, the form of an Indenture was published by Wesley, and it was recommended that all public buildings erected by the Methodists should be held by the trustees "upon special trust and confidence, and to the intent that they and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do and shall permit John Wesley, late of Lincoln College, Oxford, clerk, and such other persons as he shall from time to time appoint, and at all times, during his natural life, *and no other persons*, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises; that the said J. W., and such other persons as he appoints, may therein preach and expound God's holy word." After John's decease these responsibilities devolve upon his brother Charles; and, after the decease of Charles, upon "William Grimshaw, clerk." This is an undeniable evidence of Wesley's confidence in his friend's purposes and principles; and a proof of the closeness of the union that must have existed at this period between the founder of Methodism and the incumbent of Haworth. Had the power thus conveyed come into the hand of either Charles Wesley or Grimshaw, the position of Methodism, as a branch of the church of Christ, would have been very different from that which it has happily assumed. The latter was a beneficed clergyman, and the acceptance of this responsibility would have placed him in considerable

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difficulty. After the decease of Grimshaw, the power was to be transferred to "the Yearly Conference of the People called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds." * This is substantially the tenure upon which Wesleyan property is now generally held. The pecuniary rights and obligations are vested in lay trustees, whilst the control of the services, and the appointment of the preachers, with certain restrictions as to doctrine and period of occupancy, rest with the Conference, or with its representative for the time being, who is amenable to it for the exercise of his authority. It is evident that an extensive Connexion like that of the Wesleyan Methodists can only retain its unity by this or some similar arrangement.

On the 14th of January, 1750, Charles Wesley thus writes: "The Spirit helped our infirmity at Kingswood sacrament. A daughter of our brother Grimshaw was just departed in the Lord; being perfected in a short space." As she was "between ten and eleven years of age" in 1747, she would be about thirteen at the time of her death. On the 4th of February Charles adds: "I brought my friend Grimshaw home with me, comforted for his happy daughter." † It would appear that this young disciple died at the school to which she had been taken, but that the father was not present at her departure. On hearing of her illness, he

* Minutes of the Methodist Conference, 1749.

† Charles Wesley's Journal.

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had set out for Kingswood, but did not arrive there until the spirit had fled to its place of rest.

A Conference of the preachers in the neighbourhood of Leeds was held at that place, by Charles Wesley, on the 11th of September, 1751. It was attended by Grimshaw, and by Milner, vicar of Chipping; and also by John Nelson, William Shent, Christopher Hopper, Thomas Colbeck, Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, Paul Greenwood, Michael Fenwick, Titus Knight, Robert Swindells, and Matthew Watson,—nearly all well-known and honoured names. These had been invited, and had received notes of admission. Two others, Webb and Trathen, came, but were not admitted. Mortimer was admitted, after an examination at the noon recess; but Darney was at the same time rejected. There appears to have been no defined plan or purpose in this Conference. "I came to make observations," says Charles, "to get acquainted with the preachers, and see if God had anything to do with us or by us." They began, without design, to speak of the qualifications, work, and trials of a preacher, and of the things requisite to men who act in concert. About five hours were spent in friendly and profitable conversation, and they then parted in the spirit of love. The next day Charles was accompanied to Birstal by Grimshaw, Milner, Shent, and Bennet. On the 14th he reached Keighley at noon, and preached at four to about

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a thousand well-behaved hearers. He found great life in the Society; and on the following morning, after bestowing an hour on the leaders, "a dozen steady, solid men," he left Paul Greenwood to preach, and hastened to Haworth. After he had prayed in the pulpit, the multitude in the churchyard cried out that they could not hear, and begged him to come forth; which he did, and preached standing on a tomb-stone. Between three and four thousand heard him gladly. At two he preached again, to above double the number. The leads of the church and tower were filled with clusters of people, but they were all as still as night. "I took horse," he says, "and followed our nimble guide, Johnny Grimshaw, to Ewood. His father came panting after us." On the morning of the 16th he preached, in a convenient field, at Ewood, to about a thousand persons, and in the afternoon to about three thousand. Here he took leave of his friend Grimshaw, and of Shent and Darney; "giving written instructions that unless Darney would abstain from railing, begging, and printing nonsense, he should not be allowed to preach in any of the Methodist Societies and meeting-houses. William Shent was charged with the execution of this order. The indulgence conceded to Darney with these limitations, was granted solely at the instance of Mr. Grimshaw, to whom it was difficult to deny anything." *

* Jackson's "Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley," i. 587.

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John Wesley preached at Rough Lee, on the 8th of June, 1752, "and found a large, serious, and quiet congregation." The next day he proclaimed the truth at Ewood, "to abundance of people, with an uncommon blessing;" but he does not appear to have visited Haworth. At Bolton, John Bennet, now separated from his former friends, had told the people that Wesley had contrived to make their chapel his own property; but Grimshaw endeavoured to still the tumult, by assuring them that he knew nothing of the deed relating to the house until after it was made, and that he had no property in it still; only the usual clause was inserted, reserving the occupancy of the pulpit according to the tenor of the Indenture already described.* Grimshaw and Bennet had laboured together in Lancashire and Cheshire. In 1749 Bennet had nobly stood by the side of Wesley, when exposed to the fury of a Bolton mob; but he now accused him of preaching nothing but Popery, denying justification by faith, and making nothing of Christ. Spreading out his hands before the congregation, he cried, "Popery! Popery! Popery!"—and renounced all connexion with his former associates. The Society at Bolton was reduced, by the secession which followed in consequence, from seven-score to twelve.†

In the month of October following Whitefield

* Wesley's Journal. † Atmore's "Methodist Memorial."

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preached at Leeds, Birstal, Haworth, Halifax, and other places in Yorkshire. "Thousands and thousands flocked twice and thrice a day to hear the word of life;" so that he scarcely knew sometimes whether he had been "in heaven or on earth." These were glorious days for the church of Christ.

In an old Society-Book kept at Osmotherley, an ancient village in the North Riding, there is the following entry:—"1752. For William Grimshaw and William Darney, 1*s.* 3*d.*" These earnest soul-seekers had visited the village together, and this was the sum paid for their entertainment, or given them for travelling expenses.* There are records of a similar kind in other places, from which we learn that Grimshaw occasionally visited the romantic dales and fells around the lofty Whernside; but to what distance his visits extended in that direction neither tradition nor record enables us to state with certainty. Had he journalized with the exactness of Pepys, and given us as graphic an insight into the simple habits of the moor-side cabin as the courtier has done in relation to the intrigues of the palace, it would have been a narrative of great interest. To witness the same scenes now, we must go further north, pass the border, climb the mountain, and enter the Highlander's shielin.

* Methodist Magazine for 1847, p. 142.

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CHAPTER IX.

COVENANT WITH GOD.

At Scaitcliffe Hall, in Grimshaw's handwriting, is the MS. of a Covenant into which he entered with God. In it he mentions a Covenant made in 1738, whilst resident at Todmorden, and another made in 1744, two years after his appointment to Haworth. We have collated the copy in Newton's Life with the original MS., and find it there correctly printed. This Covenant, in the force of its language, the depth of the humility it presents, the earnestness of the spirit in which it is written, and the entirety of the consecration of which it speaks, will bear a comparison with any other record of a similar kind.

"Eternal and unchangeable Jehovah! Thou great Creator of heaven and earth, and adorable Lord of angels and men! I desire, with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, to fall down at this time, in Thine awful presence, and earnestly pray that Thou wilt penetrate my heart with a suitable sense of Thine unutterable and inconceivable glories. Trembling may justly take hold upon me, when I, a sinful worm,

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presume to lift up my head to Thee; presume to appear in Thy majestic presence on such an occasion as this! What is my nature or descent, my character or desert, that I should mention or desire to be one party in a covenant, where Thou, the King of kings, art the other? I blush even to mention it before Thee. But, O Lord, great as is Thy majesty, so also is Thy mercy. If Thou hold converse with any of Thy creatures, Thy superlatively exalted nature must stoop infinitely low. I know that through Jesus, the Son of Thy love, Thou condescendest to visit sinful mortals, and to allow their approach to Thee, and their covenant-intercourse with Thee. Nay, I know the scheme and plan are entirely Thine own, and that Thou hast graciously sent to propose it unto us; as none untaught by Thee could have been able to form it, or incline to embrace it, even when actually proposed.

"To Thee, therefore, do I now come, invited by Thy Son, and trusting in His righteousness and grace. Laying myself at Thy feet with shame and confusion of face, and smiting upon my breast, saying, with the humble publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' I acknowledge, O Lord, that I have been a great transgressor. My sins have reached unto heaven, and mine iniquities have been lifted up unto the skies. My base corruptions and lusts have numberless ways wrought to bring forth fruit unto death: and if Thou wert extreme to mark

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what I have done amiss, I could never abide it. But Thou hast graciously called me to return unto Thee, though I am a prodigal son, and a backsliding child. Behold, therefore, I solemnly come before Thee. O my Lord, I come convinced of my sin and folly. Thou knowest, O Lord, I solemnly covenanted with Thee, in the year 1738; and, before that wonderful manifestation of Thyself unto me, at church, and in the clerk's house, between the hours of ten and two o'clock on Sunday, September 2, 1744, I had again solemnly devoted myself to Thee on August 8, 1744. And now, once more and for ever, I most solemnly give up, devote, and resign all I am, spirit, soul, and body, to Thee, and to Thy pleasure and command, in Christ Jesus, my Saviour, this 4th of December, 1752: sensible, O Lord, of my vileness and unworthiness, but yet that I am Thy pardoned, justified, and regenerated child, in the Spirit and blood of my dear and precious Saviour, Jesus Christ, by clear experience.

"Glory be to Thee, O my Triune God! Permit me to repeat and renew my covenant with Thee. I desire and resolve to be wholly and for ever Thine, in Thy Spirit. Blessed God! I most solemnly surrender myself unto Thee. Hear, O heaven; and give ear, O earth! I avouch, this day, the Lord to be my God, Father, Saviour, portion for ever! I am one of His covenant children for ever. Record, O eternal Lord, in Thy book of remembrance, that henceforth I am

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Thine for ever. From this day I solemnly renounce all former lords, world, flesh, and devil, in Thy name. No more, directly or indirectly, will I obey them. I renounced them many years ago, and I renounce them for ever. This day I give myself up to Thee, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Thee; and which I know is my reasonable service. To Thee I consecrate all my worldly possessions; in Thy service I desire and purpose to spend all my time; desiring Thee to teach me to spend every moment of it to Thy glory, and the setting forth of Thy praise, in every station and relation of life I am now or may hereafter be in. And I earnestly pray, that whatever influence Thou mayest in anywise give me over others, Thou wouldst give me strength and courage to exert it to the utmost, to Thy glory, resolving not only myself to do it, but that all others, so far as I can rationally and properly influence them, shall serve the Lord. In that course would I, O Lord, steadfastly persevere to my last breath; steadfastly praying, that every day of my life may supply the defects and correct the irregularities of the former, and that, by Divine grace, I may be enabled, not only in that happy way to hold on, but to grow daily more active in it. Nor do I only consecrate all I have to Thy service, but I also most humbly resign and submit to Thy holy and sovereign will all that I have. I leave, O Lord, to Thy management and direction all I possess, and all I wish,

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and set every enjoyment and interest before Thee, to be disposed of as Thou pleasest. Continue or remove what Thou hast given me, bestow or refuse what I imagine I want, as Thou seest good; and though I dare not say, I will never repine, yet I hope I may say, I will labour not only to submit, but to acquiesce; not only to bear Thy heaviest afflictions on me, but to consent to them, and praise Thee for them; contentedly resolving, in all Thy appointments, my will into Thine; esteeming myself as nothing, and Thee, O God, as the Great Eternal All, whose word should determine, and whose power should order, all things in the world.

"Use me, O Lord, I beseech Thee, as the instrument of Thy glory: and honour me so far as, either by doing or suffering Thy appointments, I may bring praise to Thy name, and benefit to the world in which I live. And may it please Thee, from this day forward, to number me among Thy peculiar people, that I may no more be a stranger or foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. Receive, O heavenly Father, being already washed in Thy blood, and clothed with Thy righteousness, me, Thy child, and sanctify me throughout, by the power of Thy Holy Spirit. Destroy, I beseech Thee, more, the power of sin in my heart; transform me more into Thine image, and fashion me into the resemblance of Jesus, whom I would henceforth ever acknow-

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ledge as my Teacher and Sacrifice, my Intercessor, and my Lord. Communicate unto me, I beseech Thee, all needful influences of Thy purifying, cheering, comforting Spirit; and lift up that light of Thy countenance upon me, which will put the sublimest joy and gladness into my heart.

"Dispose my affairs, O God, in a manner which may be wholly subservient to Thy glory, and my own true happiness; and when I have done, borne, and endured Thy will upon earth, call me hence at what time and in what manner Thou pleasest. Only grant that in my dying moments, and the near approach of eternity, I may remember these my engagements to Thee, and may employ my latest breath in Thy service: and do Thou, when Thou seest me in the agonies of death, remember this covenant too, though I should be incapable of recollecting it. Look down upon me, O Lord, Thy languishing, dying child; place Thine everlasting arms underneath my head; put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the embraces of Thine everlasting love! Welcome it to the abodes of those who sleep in Jesus, who are with Him above, to wait with them that glorious day, when the last of Thy promises to Thy people shall be fulfilled in their triumphant resurrection, and that abundant entrance which shall be administered to them into that everlasting kingdom of which Thou hast assured them by

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Thy covenant; in the hope of which I now lay hold of it, desiring to live and die with my hand upon that hope.

"And when I am thus numbered with the dead, and all the interests of mortality are over with me for ever, if this solemn memorial should fall into the hands of any surviving friends or relatives, may it be the means of making serious impressions upon their minds; and may they read it, not only as *my* language, but as *their own*, and learn to fear the Lord my God, and, with me, to put their trust under the shadow of His wings, for time and for eternity. And may they also learn to adore, with me, that grace which inclines our hearts to enter into the covenant, and condescends to admit us into it, when so inclined; ascribing, with me, and with all the nations of the redeemed, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that glory, honour, and praise which is so justly due to each Divine Person, for the part He bears in this illustrious work. Amen.

"I solemnly subscribe this Dedication of myself to the for ever blessed Triune God, in the presence of angels, and all invisible spectators, this fourth day of December, 1752.

"WILLIAM GRIMSHAW.

"I renewed this solemn Dedication in a most awful manner, 5th of June, 1760. O that day! I carefully remember and keep it.

"I propose to renew this Dedication, with a

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quarterly fast, the first Friday in January, April, July, and October, during life."

This document is the more valuable, and the more impressive as an illustration of character, because it was not written in a moment of excitement, under the influence of a first or uncommon visitation from God; but in the midst of exertion, hardship, and untiring toil in the work of the ministry. We may smile at some of the expressions used by this good man in his public addresses, or at the singular positions in which he occasionally places himself when seeking to restrain individuals of his charge from the commission of evil; but we watch with speechless awe, and our interest passes into intense veneration, when we see him thus treading on the very threshold of heaven, and, within the circle of its glory, offering himself as a whole burnt-offering to his Redeemer and Lord.

In 1754 a shorter Covenant was written by him in the Bible then used in the reading-desk of the church, and now kept in the vestry. It is to the following effect:—

"Often have I, and once more do I, totally devote, most solemnly surrender, by this sacred Book of God, and for ever, up to God in Christ my Head and Lord, my body, soul, and spirit, and all I am, and have, and may be, in the

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fullest sense of St. Paul's exhortation, Romans xii. 1, 2. And I nothing doubt, but that, as I have hitherto found by many years' experience in Christ, His grace is sufficient for me: so I always shall be enabled to do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me.

"So help me, O Triune God!

"WILLIAM GRIMSHAW,

"Minister of Haworth.

"*August* 4, 1754."

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CHAPTER X.

PREACHING.—SIMPLICITY OF STYLE.—LONG SERMONS.—IMPRESSIVENESS OF MANNER.—EARNESTNESS.—LOWLINESS.—CONVERTS.—LETTER TO GILLIES.—GEORGE BEECROFT.—JAMES MORTON.

"THE Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," when the dead shall be raised in the last day. For the raising of the spiritually dead, the "dead in trespasses and sins," there is needed an agency of equal might and majesty. We need not wonder, then, that, when Grimshaw blew the trumpet of God, at the Divine command, he had respect to the piercing power of its blast, rather than to the modulations of its music. He did not address men merely as if asleep, but as dead; and he spoke to them with a commensurate energy: yet ever remembering that the power of resurrection was not in himself, but in the Spirit of God. He spoke plainly, that all might understand; and with force and point, that the attention of all might be arrested.

We have more than once seen a congregation fasten their eyes with great interest upon a speaker whose language they did not understand.

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The spell was in his earnestness. Though his words failed as a medium to convey the particular thought then enunciated, they were invested with a power which enabled the listener to feel that there was something great and grand coming forth from the depths of the speaker's heart. The effect must, therefore, have been most striking, when, as in the case of Grimshaw, there was the same earnestness, the subject-matter of address was the salvation of the soul, and the language used was so plain that even the little child could readily understand it. The drowsy peasant was aroused when he heard the very language used every day by himself spoken by one professing to have received a commission from heaven, and in that language making known to him the wonderful works of God. The affecting story of the offering of Isaac is recorded in a style so plain that it appears impossible to make it more graphic by words; but when Grimshaw read it, he explained the expression, "a ram caught in a thicket," by the moor-side paraphrase, "a tup that had fastened its head in a bunch of briers;" and, as he said it, every countenance, kindling into brightness, seemed to declare, "I see it before me just now." To the untutored mind these strokes were like the home-thrust of the seer, when he said startlingly to the king, "Thou art the man."

In a long note appended to his Reply to White,

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we have an insight into the plain and pointed manner in which we may suppose he would address the people. He is proceeding to illustrate the position that "our Lord did not only intend the miraculous cures that He wrought upon men's bodies merely for the credentials of His Messiahship, but to be lively emblems also of the cures He works upon our souls; so that what we find in the one, the like corresponding therewith we shall discover in the other."

"The paralytic," he says, "was so helpless as to be borne on a bed by four; (an argument of his extreme weakness;) and not only so, but, sensible of his incurable condition, and confident that Jesus alone, and no other, could and would cure him, was resolved, at all hazards, as appears from the circumstances of the story, to be set before Him. (Another plain indication of a convinced sinner's faith, that he must either come to Jesus alone for mercy and forgiveness, or perish for ever.) 'Jesus, seeing their faith,' (O, what a powerful thing is faith!) says, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,' (verse 5,) and then, 'Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house,' (verse 11,)—upon which words 'he immediately arose, and took up his bed, and went forth before them all.' His cure was instantaneous and sensible. 'He immediately arose,' who could scarcely, it is probable, stir hand or foot before; and, as a further proof of it, bore back the bed to his house, which had borne him

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to Christ. Moreover, he had his sins forgiven him, in express words; he had therefore the fullest assurance of his cure and pardon. As certain, sudden, and spiritually sensible is the remission of sins, the cure of the sin-sick souls, who come by faith, as this man did, to Jesus.

"I know it is as great a paradox, and counted as gross blasphemy by the letter-learned wisemen of the present day, to hear men affirm, that they know their sins are forgiven them by that same Jesus, (who, they ought to consider, hath still power on earth to forgive sins, verse 10,) as it was to the Scribes, in our Saviour's days, to hear him, *vivâ voce*, to pronounce the same then. But where is the absurdity or unreasonableness of it? It is not only equally as easy a matter to our Saviour to pardon our souls, as to heal our bodies, (verse 9,) or as possible with Him to manifest the one as the other to us; but, methinks, the former is of infinitely greater consequence to be known than the latter; and that for the following most important reasons: 1st. Because it is impossible for a man to know himself to be a Christian, till he is assured that his sins are forgiven him; (forgiveness of sins being but another name for a Christian;) and 2ndly. Because upon this knowledge of remission indispensably depends the love of God, and the obedience and worship of God. This also we may clearly learn from the miracles of our Lord, and particularly from this of the paralytic: when he

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was cured, he arose, 'took up that whereon he lay, and departed, glorifying God.' (Luke v. 25.) This glory that he gave to God was out of a clear sense that he had of this mercy; the want of this sense, which to him would have been the very same as no cure at all, would have prevented all praise to God. The man was not only cured, but he knew that he was cured; and therefore it was not only that mercy, but the knowledge of that mercy, that caused him to glorify God. In like manner, it is not remission of sins, but the knowledge of this remission, that not only discovers us to be Christians, but causes us to love, and praise, and serve our Lord Jesus. So far ought we, therefore, to be from opposing this most necessary, gracious, and soul-solacing Gospel truth, that we ought by all means to esteem it our chiefest wisdom, care, comfort, and happiness, on this side eternity, with all speed to secure ourselves of this witness, which, says St. John, 'he that believeth on the Son of God hath in himself.' (1 John v. 10.)"

Soon after his removal to Haworth, the church was filled at every opportunity, and the interest in his ministrations continued to the end of his life. He read the Liturgy with great solemnity, as an important part of the service, and not as a mere prelude to something of another kind afterwards to be introduced. The fervour of his spirit being caught by the congregation,

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there was usually an appearance of great devoutness presented by the whole company of the worshippers, though the church was crowded in every part. If any carelessness was observed, it was instantly rebuked; and he would not proceed until he saw every person present in the attitude of devotion. When he ascended the pulpit to preach, every head was uplifted, and every eye fixed upon the speaker, as he proceeded to enforce the Law, or unfold the privileges of the Gospel; and frequently all classes were in tears by turn, as he warned the sinner, exhorted the unfaithful, cheered the drooping, or encouraged the believer to seek for the uttermost salvation of God. It was not thought by the people that he preached too long, though his sermons sometimes extended to two hours. For this he once made an apology to John Newton. "If I were in some situations," he said, "I might not think it needful to speak so much; but many of my hearers, who are wicked and careless, are likewise very ignorant, and very slow of apprehension. If they do not understand me, I cannot hope to do them good; and when I think of the uncertainty of life, that perhaps it may be the last opportunity afforded, and that it is not impossible I may never see them again till I meet them in the great day, I know not how to be explicit enough. I endeavour to set the subject in a variety of lights; I express the same thoughts in different words, and can scarcely tell how to leave off, lest

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I should have omitted something, for the want of which my preaching and their hearing might prove in vain. And thus, though I fear I weary others, I am still unable to satisfy myself." This method might then be attended with benefit, when the opportunities of receiving instruction were few and far between; but it would be injudicious to follow it in the present circumstances of the church.

In the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, he did not confine himself to the prescribed form, but gave frequent addresses, short and animated, in which he exhorted the people to look for an instant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whilst they were there present in the sanctuary. Hymns and psalms were also sung at intervals, adapted to the subject of the previous discourse, or the design of the solemnity; so that the people enjoyed a heaven upon earth, and returned to their habitations blessing and praising the Lord for His great goodness and unspeakable mercy.*

The number of the persons who flocked to his church from other places, even upon ordinary occasions, was so great as to lead to the remark, that, however striking his success might be in his own parish, it was still more so among those who came from more distant localities. There were hearers every Sabbath who had come ten or twelve

* Lives of Grimshaw, by Newton and Myles.

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miles; and the same persons were seldom absent, though sometimes they had to cross the snow-covered mountain, and bide the biting of the winter's blast, in order to reach the place of privilege. The preachers being few in number, some of the places were visited only after an interval of several weeks; but the anxiety of the people to hear the word of God may be learnt from the fact, that John Madden, of Bacup, often walked to Haworth on the Sabbath, returning the same evening,—a distance, out and home, of nearly forty miles. As his feet trod the yielding heather, or the gorge of the mountain was passed, his voice told forth the gladness of a full heart, and he repeated aloud the words of the prophet: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." (Isaiah lv. 12, 13.) Having entered upon a farm, John invited the preachers to visit him and address his benighted neighbours; and he had often afterwards the pleasure of receiving under his roof Grimshaw, Darney, Larwood, Colbeck, and others, whose heavenly-mindedness made a deep impression upon his heart.*

* Methodist Magazine for 1811, p. 521.

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The effect of Grimshaw's ministry was not a mere excitement, dependent upon noise and tumult for the continuance of its existence. It was seen in the holy conversation of the believer, and in the formation of honest character. Acts of kindness and affection were reciprocated between neighbour and neighbour; a love for the word of God and the communings of secret prayer began to prevail; and the glorious scenes of many a death-bed told of the power of the truth. One year, in which he buried eighteen persons, he had great reason to believe that sixteen of them entered into the kingdom of God.

The mode of address he adopted could scarcely fail to make a lasting impression upon the mind. "I shall never forget," says John Pawson,* writing in the year 1803, "a sermon and prayer which I heard from him, near fifty years ago. The discourse was upon these words, 'O fear the LORD, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him.' (Psalm xxxiv. 9.) He began by observing, 'Many people think there are no saints now on the earth; the saints are all gone to heaven long since; and one might almost as well call a man an angel as a saint.' He then showed from the Scriptures, that to be a saint and to be a Christian are exactly the same, and proceeded to describe the Christian character. When he came to amplify the promise, 'There

* Methodist Magazine for 1803, p. 453.

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is no want to them that fear the Lord,' his mind was greatly enlarged, and he spoke in a most encouraging manner to the poor, despised, and at that day persecuted people. And, in the fulness of his heart, he said, 'Why, before the Lord will suffer His promise to fail, He will lay aside His divinity, He will un-God Himself!' He then exhorted the people to be thankful for the many mercies which they received at the hand of the Lord..... After sermon, in order to convince the people of their duty, he thus addressed the Lord in prayer: 'Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing; take all these poor people under Thy care, and bring them in safety to their own houses, and give them their suppers when they get home; but let them not eat a morsel till they have said a grace: then, let them eat and be satisfied; and return thanks to Thee when they have done. Let them then kneel down and say their prayers, before they go to bed; let them do this for once, at any rate, and then Thou wilt preserve them till the morning.'"

From a minister who resided in the neighbourhood of Haworth we have the following account:—"I have often heard Mr. Grimshaw with great profit. In prayer, before his sermon, he excelled most men I have ever heard. His soul was carried out, in that exercise, with that earnestness, affection, and fervour, which indicated most intimate communion with God. His love and compassion for the souls of poor

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sinners, and his concern for their salvation, were manifested, in the strongest manner, in all his proceedings. Yet, though his talents were great, his labours abundant, and his success wonderful, he had the meanest and most degrading thoughts of himself, and of all that he did. Humility was a shining feature in his character."

The testimony of John Newton, who knew him well, and must often have heard him preach, is to the following effect:—"The desire of usefulness to persons of the weakest capacity, or most destitute of the advantages of education, influenced his phraseology in preaching. Though his abilities as a speaker, and his fund of general knowledge, rendered him very competent to stand before great men; yet, as his stated hearers were chiefly of the poorer and more unlettered class, he condescended to accommodate himself, in the most familiar manner, to their ideas, and to their modes of expression. Like the apostle, he disdained that elegance and excellence of speech which is admired by those who seek entertainment, perhaps not less than instruction, from the pulpit: he rather chose to deliver his sentiments in what he used to term *market-language;* and though the warmth of his heart, and the rapidity of his imagination, might sometimes lead him to clothe his thoughts in words which even a candid critic could not wholly justify, yet the general effect of his plain manner was striking and impressive, suited to

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make the dullest understand, and to fix for the time the attention of the most careless. Frequently a sentence, which a delicate hearer might judge quaint or vulgar, conveyed an important truth to the ear, and fixed it in the memory for years after the rest of the sermon and the general subject were forgotten. Judicious hearers could easily excuse some escapes of this kind, and allow that, though he had a singular felicity in bringing down the great truths of the Gospel, to a level with the meanest capacity, he did not degrade them. The solemnity of his manner, the energy with which he spoke, the spirit of love which beamed in his eyes and breathed through his addresses, were convincing proofs that he did not trifle with his people. I may give my judgment upon this point, something in his own way, by quoting a plain and homely proverb, which says, 'That is the best cat which catches the most mice.' His improprieties, if he was justly chargeable with any, are easily avoided; but very few ministers have had equal success. But if his language was more especially suited to the taste of his unpolished, rustic hearers, his subject-matter was calculated to affect the hearts of all, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant; and they who refused to believe were often compelled to tremble."

He was anxious that all the preachers over whom he had influence should be inspired with a

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zeal ardent as his own. To Paul Greenwood and Thomas Mitchell he said: "If you are sent of God to preach the Gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed, you must not expect to gain much of this world's good by preaching the Gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth; and he will let nothing go for God and His cause but what is forced from him." To Thomas Lee he writes:* "I hope your bow abides in full strength, and that you can preach twenty times a week. If you can preach oftener, do. Preaching is health, food, and physic to me; and why not to thee, my brother? Besides, Tommy, there is very great need of preaching now. For iniquity aboundeth, the love of many grows cold, and God's judgments are out in the earth. Tommy, let us preach four times a day, or thirty times a week, whether you please, or can bear better. It will be all little enough. Our Master well deserves it; yea, and infinitely more. O that we may spend and be spent in preaching HIS everlasting Gospel, in converting sinners and confirming believers!"

In his own discipleship he was humble, as in

* Myles records that this letter was copied from the original MS. by the Rev. George Marsden "at the Conference-table, July 30, 1806." The original is now in the possession of the Rev. W. M. Punshon.

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his manner of teaching others he was authoritative and unflinching. He sat under the ministry of the simple men who then went forth to call sinners to repentance, listening to some of the very weakest with respectful attention; thereby doing honour to the sincerity of the men and the grandeur of their message. At one time, when William Shent had been preaching in his kitchen, he fell down before him, and said, "I am not worthy to stand in your presence." At another time, in the same place, after Benjamin Beanland had been preaching, he embraced him, and said, "The Lord bless thee, Ben: this is worth a hundred of my sermons." After hearing some one who was a candidate for the work of a local preacher, he clapped him smartly upon the back, and said to him, to encourage him, "Thee and me will make one between us." Of John Wilkinson, the first member of the Methodist Society at Keighley, the first leader, and one of the earliest local preachers, he said, "I do not think myself fit to preach in his presence." These were days of rare simplicity, when a clergyman could act thus without losing the respect of the people, and when the unlettered preacher could receive this homage without losing the grace of God. When opening a chapel at Thorner, near Leeds, as he knew that many were present who would not have come to hear one of the regular preachers, he said, "Now, many of you are come here to-day because you heard the

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minister of Haworth was to be here, and you think that I can preach better than the rest of my brethren: but you are quite mistaken; many of them preach full as well as I do. But, in truth, we are all alike; there is not a chip to choose; in good faith, there is not." *

In his Reply to White we have further information relative to the class of persons who were most commonly the recipients of grace, as well as to the manner in which it was received. "Those, it is remarkable," he says, "who are effectually convinced and converted in this our Gospel day, are mostly persons of all ages from fifteen to fifty years of age; few younger, and but few older; some perhaps at sixty, but very rarely; and the more so, the more they exceed this age. Such, according to the old proverb, As they have lived their lives, generally take their end. And, as the Holy Ghost effects the preparation of the heart at different ages, so by different means: by dreams, misfortunes, losses, death of friends or children, conversing with spiritual people, &c. But these, with almost innumerable other means, may be called irregular. And it is observable, that the Holy Ghost generally uses them in such cases and places, where people have not the opportunity of hearing the Gospel: otherwise His common method of convincing sinners, or preparing their hearts for receiving the Gospel, is by preaching

* Pawson's Letter, Methodist Magazine, 1803, p. 451.

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it. And this, again, two ways: either by preaching the law in its right manner, for their terror, curse, and condemnation, as seems to have been John Baptist's method; Matt. iii. 7—10, Luke iii. 7—14; or the life, death, and sufferings of Jesus Christ, as He directed St. Peter and St. Paul. Acts ii. 22; xiii. 23. In the next place, this conviction, or preparation of a sinner's heart to believe savingly in Jesus, is observed to be effected in some in a shorter, in others in a longer time: but in all it may be looked upon to be so, when the conscience is so loaden with the guilt of sin, and a clear sense of the insufficiency and vanity of its own goodness, as to doubt whether God will pardon or not. Such are often brought to think that their day of grace is past; that it is therefore too late to look for mercy, and their eternal damnation is inevitable. Some indeed are more gently dealt with in this case than others; but all that are converted are brought at least to see this first step, with deep compunction of spirit, that there is no way but perishing, whatever their lives were before, whether good or bad, if the Lord in mercy spare and save not."

In some instances the effect of the word was to produce "weeping, roaring, and agonies." The remarks made by Grimshaw upon these occurrences are judicious, and show that he endeavoured to guard against all false excitement with jealous watchfulness. In the letter written to Gillies, in

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1754,* from which we may also learn in what manner the work of God was then progressing, he says: "I have only the following observations to make to you:—

"1st. That soon after the devil observed such crying, and distress of soul, and agitation of body to affect people under the word, he also began to seize people, under the word, with strange unnatural distortions, convulsions, hideous roarings; to bring, as we plainly saw, contempt and disgrace upon the true work of God: for it is remarkable that the generality of such persons, whatever pretences of repentance they might then make, dwindled away to nothing.

"2dly. That for seven years past the crying and agitations, in sincere penitents, are in a manner ceased, and are rarely seen or heard of. The Lord Jesus now carries on His work in the heart in a still, serious, affecting way; and, I trust, with as great success as ever since it began.

"3dly. That, in most places where the word has been purely preached, it still flourishes; congregations increase; and doors are continually opening. 'Come and help us,' is the common cry.

"4thly. That out of our Societies the Lord hath raised up many to preach the Gospel. None of them called thereto, but such only as are experimentally born again, and pardoned, and know the Lord Jesus to be in them, the hope of glory.

* Gillies's "Historical Collections relating to the Success of the Gospel." Appendix.

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Those speak, as our Lord says, that they do know. They speak from the heart to the heart. Their labours are wonderfully blessed. And such are God's chief instruments employed in carrying on the present wonderful work.

"5thly. That, whereas the work took place at first mainly among the illiterate, poor, and vulgar, it of late has gained the credit and esteem of the more wealthy, wise, and learned sort of people. Many such, in most places, are come to experience the life, peace, and power of Christ Jesus in their souls. That so it is, is well for them indeed; but whether it presage well for the future prosperity of this work, I will not say.

"6thly. That, at the first coming of the Gospel to any place, it generally happens that Satan roars, and mobs and riots are stirred up; but, however violent, the Lord seldom suffers much harm to be done to His people: quietness is soon procured, and His word takes place.

"7thly and lastly. That the most material impediment met with, and detriment received, is, I fear, from the Anabaptists and Antinomians. These have [made], I am afraid, and still do make, great rending and confusion among our Societies. From these evils the Lord deliver us!"

The Baptists are now a large and influential body in this neighbourhood; but it was a grief to Grimshaw when their Societies commenced, as he was a devoted servant of the Establishment, and foresaw that the introduction of their system

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would swell the ranks of Dissent, and necessarily produce divisions and mistrust among the followers of the Lord. He still respected them, and hailed them as brethren when he met them in his rambles; but when they built a chapel in Haworth, he said, "They may go into my quarry, and dig up as many stones there as they possibly can; but they shall not have the stones which I have dug up, and hewn and squared for the Lord's building, if I can help it." When his own children thus forsook him, he sorrowed with the affection of a regretful father.

The visits of Grimshaw to distant places were attended, in many known instances, by permanent good. Resident at Hawksworth, near Otley, there was a family named Beecroft.* One of its members removed to Bramley, where he married, and was greatly blessed of God in his earthly possessions. The sister of his wife had become a Methodist; but Mrs. Beecroft, thinking herself to be "a mighty good Christian," for a time resisted all the importunities that were used by her now happy relative to bring her within the circle of the same influence. "I will not believe thee, nor any of the Methodists," she said: "it cannot be that anybody should know their sins forgiven. I am sorry thou art so deceived, by such deluded people; a people, indeed, whom everybody despises." But as Grimshaw was expected to

* Methodist Magazine for 1805, p. 323.

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preach in the same neighbourhood, and he was a clergyman of the Church of England, she resolved that she would hear him, saying, "I believe *he* can tell me right." This resolution was fatal to her former trust, as its falsity was at once revealed, when "the commandment came, and sin revived." It was still some time before she would hear any of the Methodist preachers proper; but after many misgivings she altered her mind, and, on hearing one of them, was induced to join the Society, and afterwards became a mother in Israel. The prejudices of her husband were equally great; but when Bramley was visited by J. North, probably a local preacher, he went with others to listen to this strange mode of instruction, and he too became as a stricken hart. As was most natural under the circumstances, he thought North a much better preacher than Grimshaw. "I think," said he, "never man spake as this man. He knows all the Scriptures; besides, he knows my heart." He became the tenth member of the Society in Bramley; and it was not known, in the space of forty-one years, that he ever omitted to attend his class, even in the time of harvest. Mr. Beecroft was the grandfather of George Skirrow Beecroft, Esq., in the present session, 1860, one of the members of Parliament for the borough of Leeds.

On another occasion, as Grimshaw was preaching in the neighbourhood of Middleton, near Leeds, in the open air, Mr. and Mrs. Crowther,

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of that village, were among the wondering attendants.* The sermon was founded on the former part of the Lord's prayer; and he showed his hearers, from the word of God, that whilst they lived in sin, and loved to practise it, they were the servants of sin and of the devil; and he charged the people not to call God their Father any more, unless they would forsake their sins. Mr. Crowther was at this time powerfully awakened, and afterwards found peace with God. His brother-in-law, Mr. James Morton, who afterwards became a useful local preacher, was induced to follow in the same steps. At one time, under the pressure of severe temptation, he left home. Being met by a friend, who asked him whither he was going, he replied, "I am running away from the cross: I can bear it no longer." "Stop, man," was the appropriate advice of his friend; "turn back: bear thy cross, and thy cross will bear thee." The snare was thus broken, and the stratagem of the enemy overcome. His labours were extended to the distance of fifty or sixty miles from home, and not long ago persons were living in Lincolnshire who had been arrested in their course of sin through his instrumentality. When no longer able to preach, he regularly visited a number of families, near his own home, once a week; and in extreme old age an ass was procured for him, that he might still continue his work of mercy.

* Methodist Magazine for 1805, p. 405.

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CHAPTER XI.

HALIFAX.—DR. GILLIES.—METHODIST CONFERENCE.—STEWARDS' BOOK.—WESLEY AT HAWORTH.—RELATION OF METHODISM TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.—WATCHNIGHT AT LEEDS.—CHARLES WESLEY.—LETTER TO LEE.—METHODIST CHAPEL BUILT AT HAWORTH.—LETTER TO MERRYWEATHER.—ROMAINE.—JOHN NEWTON.—LETTER FROM CHARLES WESLEY.—GRIMSHAW'S REPLY.—CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.—GEORGE LOWE.—BARNARD CASTLE.—LETTER TO THE SOCIETIES AT NEWCASTLE.—TITUS KNIGHT.

Our last notice of Grimshaw, in the regular order of date, was in connexion with a visit paid by Whitefield to Haworth, in the year 1752. In the same year a chapel was opened by the Methodists in Halifax. It was not of very large dimensions, as it is said to have measured, outside, fourteen yards by ten. The Society was too poor to attempt its erection without assistance from other quarters, though the congregation attending a room occupied in Mount-street was much too large to be there accommodated. When this became known to Grimshaw, he made a liberal advance of money to assist them,

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amounting, with a sum lent by William Greenwood, of Mixenden, to £300.* After the regular services at Haworth on the Sabbath, the devoted incumbent sometimes rode over to Halifax, a distance of twelve miles, that he might preach in the evening at this chapel. On one occasion, as he came near the town, he overtook two young men, and said to them, "Now, lads, where are you going to-night?" They replied, "We are going to hear mad Grimshaw: we shall have some fine sport to-night." He said nothing further, but no doubt there was a significant smile upon his countenance, and his spirit would be uplifted to God in prayer for the thoughtless youths. They entered the chapel with the congregation; but in the course of the service one of them fell down in great distress of soul. "Come, come," said he, "help him up: we shall have some fine sport to-night." From that time there was one less among the ranks of Satan.

Until the summer of the following year, the public roads around Leeds were narrow, generally consisting of a hollow way, that allowed a passage only for carriages drawn by horses in a single row, with elevated causeways, covered with flags or boulder-stones. At this time turnpike-roads were first made, and gates put up; but this movement, as in more recent instances, excited the wrath of the people, and there was a riot in consequence,

* Walker's "Wesleyan Methodism in Halifax."

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which was not put down until several persons had been shot by the military in the streets of Leeds, and upwards of twenty wounded. It was not until long afterwards that these roads were extended to the localities most usually visited by Grimshaw; and, in estimating the amount of labour undergone by the zealous men who itinerated so extensively at this period, we shall greatly err, unless we take into account the character of the tracks along which they had to urge their jaded steeds.

In July Grimshaw wrote to the Rev. John Gillies, D.D., of Glasgow. After stating that he had been informed by Wesley of his intention to publish his "Historical Collections," he says, "I promised to send you an account of the birth and progress of the work in these parts, which I will do; but I wait the assistance of two or three fellow-labourers in it, whom the Redeemer was pleased to send forth as the first instruments of it here. Then you shall have it." He recommended that the publication of the work should be delayed, until more subscriptions had been procured. "I exceedingly love," says Gillies, in writing to Wesley, "the honest Christian spirit that runs through his letter; but am not sure how far he judged right in advising a delay of printing. I know you was of a different mind. If you have not seen reason to alter your opinion, I beg you will write soon, that I may write to Mr. Grimshaw on the necessity of being expeditious:

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and I wish you would also take the trouble to write to him, that I may get the accounts he speaks of, against February or March next; for I hope by that time to be advanced in printing to that part of the book."* These accounts were sent on the 19th July, 1754, and did not appear in the first edition of the Collections, but were afterwards printed in the Appendix.

At the Methodist Conference, held in Leeds, and commencing on Tuesday, May 22d, 1753, Grimshaw was present. "Most of our preachers met," says Wesley, "and conversed freely together; as we did, morning and afternoon, to the end of the week; when our Conference ended with the same blessing as it began; God giving us all to be not only of one heart, but of one judgment." In the Minutes of this Conference, the seventh and eighth Circuits are called "Yorkshire and Haworth;" and the preachers therein stationed were Jonathan Maskew, John Whitford, Enoch Williams, Joseph Jones, William Shent, and John Edwards.

Wesley preached, on the 29th of the same month, at Keighley, where the loving spirit and exemplary behaviour of one young man had been the means of convincing almost the whole town,

* Methodist Magazine for 1797, p. 511. Writing to Wesley, on the 21st February, 1757, Gillies says, "I had hardly been able to publish the Historical Collections, but for the subscriptions you got me in England."

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except those of his own household. The next day he rode to Haworth, where he preached to a crowded congregation, after the incumbent had read prayers; but as he had preached ten or eleven times in three days, besides meeting the Societies, his voice began to fail; and, though he was not hoarse, he lacked the strength to speak. Yet this did not deter him from riding over the mountain to Heptonstall; and, as he preached there in the afternoon, the voice that had spoken the glad tidings of salvation to myriads was restored, and he was heard by the whole congregation.*

In the Stewards' Book at Keighley is the following memorandum, in Grimshaw's handwriting:—"Whereas it appears from this book y^t^ no Accounts are therein inserted from Oct. 31st, 1749, to this present day, July 25, 1754; Be it known that the reason of it is the discontinuing Quarter-Meetings from that to this day." Then follows the account of the income and expenditure for the same year; from which it will be seen that the number of places connected with this meeting was less, but the income greater, than in the account we have given for 1748.

	"*July* 25, 1754.	£.	s.	d.
"Societies:	Of Haworth, &c., by Wm. Grimshaw.....	1	7	6
	Of Todmorden, &c., by Sam. Fielden.....	2	10	1

* Wesley's Journal.

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	£.	s.	d.
Of Mixenden, &c., by William Greenwood	1	12	6
Of Heptonstall, &c., by Jno. Parker	3	7	0
	£ 8	17	1
"Disburs'd.			
By Wm. Grimshaw	0	6	7
By Samuel Fielden	1	6	1
By Wm. Greenwood	4	12	0
By John Parker	3	10	3½
To Major Marshall	0	3	6
	£ 9	18	5½"

The names of John Parker and Major Marshall appear in the record of the meeting held in 1748 at Todmorden Edge. William Greenwood had a small competency, and was a generous friend to the infant Society at Halifax. There was preaching at his house; the preachers were entertained at his table on their visits to this neighbourhood; and he himself occasionally proclaimed the word of life.

Towards the end of April, 1755, Wesley was again in the neighbourhood of Haworth. We give the record of this visit in his own Saxon, clear as the mountain-air he then breathed:—

"Friday, 25. About ten I preached near Todmorden. The people stood, row above row, on the side of the mountain. They were rough enough in outward appearance; but their hearts were as melting wax. One can hardly conceive

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anything more delightful than the vale through which we rode from hence. The river ran through the green meadows on the right. The fruitful hills and woods rose on either hand; yet here and there a rock hung over, the little holes of which put me in mind of those beautiful lines (a paraphrase of the 18th verse of the one hundred and fourth Psalm),—

'Te, Domine, intonsi montes, te saxa loquentur
Summa Deum, dum montis amat juga pendulus hircus,
Saxorumque colit latebrosa cuniculus antra!'

"At three in the afternoon I preached at Heptonstall, on the brow of the mountain. The rain began almost as soon as I began to speak. I prayed that, if God saw best, it might be stayed till I had delivered His word. It was so; and then began again. But we had only a short stage to Ewood.

"Saturday, 26. I preached at seven, to a large and serious congregation, and again at four in the afternoon. When I began, in a meadow near the house, the wind was so high, I could hardly speak. But the winds too are in God's hand: in a few minutes that inconvenience ceased, and we found the Spirit of God breathing in the midst of us, so that great was our rejoicing in the Lord.

"Sunday, 27. The rain began about five, and did not intermit till we came to Haworth; notwithstanding which, a multitude of people

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were gathered together at ten. In the afternoon I was obliged to go out of the church, abundance of people not being able to get in. The rain ceased from the moment I came out, till I had finished my discourse. How many proofs must we have that there is no petition too little, any more than too great, for God to grant?

"Monday, 28. I preached at Keighley; on Tuesday at Bradford, which is now as quiet as Birstal. Such a change has God wrought in the hearts of the people since John Nelson was in the dungeon here."

This was a year of great importance to the interests of Methodism. "Our Conference," says Wesley, "began at Leeds, Tuesday, May 6. The point on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large was, Whether we ought to separate from the Church? Whatever was advanced on one side or the other was seriously and calmly considered; and on the third day we were all fully agreed in that general conclusion—that (whether it was lawful or not) it was no ways expedient." Sixty-three persons were present; some of whom are called "half-itinerants," and others, "chief local preachers." The distinction between the local and itinerant preacher was in some instances difficult to define, as many of the local brethren occasionally itinerated, and the itinerants not unfrequently located for a period. Writing to his wife, Charles

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Wesley says,—"Mr. Grimshaw (whom the separatists claim as their own) designed coming to the Conference, only to take his leave of us, if we did of the Church." We may infer that he was satisfied with the decision to which the Conference had come, as his name appears in the Minutes as having charge of the Societies in the Haworth Circuit. The entry is thus: "Haworth —W. Grimshaw, John Nelson, Jas. Schofield." The only other Circuit in Yorkshire is Leeds.*

The Societies at Manchester and other places were at this time exposed to injurious attacks from a diversity of sources; and the means taken to preserve them in allegiance to the Established Church had made many of the members a readier prey to men who led them speedily into confirmed Dissent. The Methodists had no service in Church-hours; the preachers, who, in many instances, had been the means of rescuing them from a life of sin, were not permitted to dispense to them the Sacraments; and from the Communion of the Church of England they were repelled, sometimes by force, and at other times by the unholy lives of the clergy. When the pulpits of the metropolis were closed against Whitefield and the Wesleys, there was no other way open to them, with their convictions of duty, but to address the perishing masses in unconsecrated places. It was declared, as a reason for excluding them, that wherever they preached

* Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism."

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the churches were so filled that the regular parishioners were prevented from occupying their own seats, and their families were shut out from the worship of God. What course was then to be pursued? A flame had been enkindled that no ecclesiastical ordinance could extinguish. Had the leading agents been willing to remain silent, they who had been seared by its flash, or cheered by its radiance, would have been unwilling to permit them. There was now no alternative but for some other mode of church-agency to be devised, either within the pale of the Establishment, or exterior to it; and if the Church would not move from its antiquated forms, if it had no elasticity by which it could yield to the force of circumstances, and take advantage of one of the grandest opportunities ever presented to the ministers of truth, to assume a position of moral majesty, a necessity was presented for the calling forth of some new economy, to which the rejected privilege could be transferred, and by which its blessed effects could be continued and extended. There were examples of highest authority, ecclesiastical, apostolical, and divine, for preaching in the open air. This course was therefore adopted, after some hesitation; and multitudes were soon gathered together, in the street, the lane, and the wood; listening to the word of life from the lips of men who had been led unwillingly, but by the force of circumstances, thus to act. To maintain

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the power of godliness in the church, there must be individual oversight and instruction, as well as opportunity for the mutual forthtelling of combat and conquest: but these were not afforded in the Establishment, nor could its clergy be induced to attempt their introduction. A resolution was formed, and for some time persisted in, of preaching in various places, and especially in the large towns, without forming Societies. Wesley was strongly averse from the taking of any step that might lead to the forming of a sect. But the same necessity that led him to preach out of consecrated bounds, obliged him to institute means by which the converts could be further assisted in things pertaining to the life divine: hence the formation of classes, bands, and Societies, with recognised overseers; and the establishment of a church (though repudiating the name) complete in all its parts, with the exception that the arrangement for the administration of the sacraments was exterior to itself, and was imperfect and insufficient.

This was cause of uneasiness to many of the more thoughtful members at an early period in Methodism. There were convictions also, upon the part of several of the preachers, requiring to be respected. They were conscious of a call from God to the work of the ministry; their commission had been owned from above in the conversion of multitudes of sinners; they were separated from all secular pursuits, and solemnly set apart for

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spiritual service; they saw nothing in the word of God that forbade persons in such circumstances administering the sacraments; there was a loud call from their flocks that they should exercise the power they were believed to possess, and thus relieve the burdened consciences of the people; and they saw that in numerous instances the sacraments were not received at all by the members of Society; and this, not from any indifference to the ordinance, or from a wish to repudiate the obligation, but from the inability, as they thought, to receive it with profit in the only channel then open to their acceptance.

The link that bound the Societies to the Church became in time too feeble to resist the force by which it was assailed; and after a long, severe, and perilous struggle, Nonconformity became the acknowledged position of nearly all the Societies raised up by the influence of Methodism. Through the existence of the Conference, with its regular organization and laws, the converts were prevented from running, as had been apprehended, into a confused medley of heresies and schisms. Instead of these, there is existent a great community, as orthodox as the Church itself, exercising its influence in almost every country of the world, over millions of souls. The Methodists generally, even in our own day, respect the Church, and rejoice in its prosperity. Notwithstanding many provocations to take an opposite course, they have withheld their countenance from

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agitators, who seek to separate the Church from the State; and they hail with unfeigned satisfaction the evidences of vigour recently manifested by the clergy in their attempts to carry religion to the hearts and homes of the poor, and to grapple with the master evils of the times.

On the 7th of October, 1756, Grimshaw joined Charles Wesley at Seacroft, near Leeds. The next day Charles writes: "I continued till one in conference with my worthy friend and fellow-labourer—a man after my own heart, whose love of the Church flows from his love of Christ. With such may my lot be cast in both worlds." The two friends rode together to Bramley, where Charles preached, in a chapel that had been a large barn, to a multitude of serious souls. On the Sabbath he preached to between four and five thousand people at Birstal; his congregation being less than it would have been, because Whitefield was preaching on the same day at Haworth.

A watchnight was held at Leeds on the following evening, which was attended by Charles Wesley, Whitefield, and Grimshaw. This must have been a memorable occasion in the annals of the West-Riding Methodists, when three such men took part in one service; men of an attractiveness so powerful that the uplifted voice of each was almost daily listened to by thousands of the servants of God. There was heavy rain, but the

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house "was as full as it could cram." The prayers and hymns were all attended with a solemn power, and few went away unawakened. "I have been," says Whitefield, "in honest Mr. Grimshaw's and Mr. Ingham's round, preaching upon the mountains to many thousands. One that was awakened three years ago is gone to heaven, and desired to be buried upon the spot where she was awakened. The sacrament at Mr. G.'s was most awful, and the watchnight at Leeds exceedingly solemn."* At this time Ingham's round took in above four hundred miles; he had six fellow-labourers, and one thousand persons in his Societies, most of whom he thought to be converted.

On the 16th Charles rode with "faithful Thomas Colbeck" to Keighley, where he found "a large handsome room well filled," and Grimshaw assisted at the Society. He recommended family-religion with all his might, and for nearly an hour and a half the cloud rested on the assembly. "We had no room to spare," he writes on the following day, Sunday, Oct. 17th, "at six in the morning, while I commended them to God, and to the word of His grace. I preached a second time, at Haworth, (Mr. Grimshaw reading prayers,) from Psalm xlvi. 8. My mouth was opened to declare the approaching judgments, and the glory which shall follow, when the Lord is exalted in all the earth. The church, which had been lately

* Whitefield's Letters.

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enlarged, could scarce contain the congregation; who seemed all to tremble at the threatenings, or rejoice in the promises, of God. We had a blessed number of communicants, and the Master of the feast in the midst. I prayed and exhorted afterwards. Our hearts were lifted up to meet Him in His glorious kingdom. After an hour's interval we met again, as many as the church-walls could contain; but twice the number stood without, till the prayers were over. Then I mounted a scaffold, and, lifting up my eyes, saw the fields white unto harvest. We had prayed for a fair day, and had the petitions we asked. The churchyard, which will hold thousands, was quite covered. God gave me a voice to reach them all. I warned them of those things which shall come to pass, and warmly pressed them to private, family, and public prayer; enlarged on the glorious consequences thereof, even deliverance from the last plagues, and standing before the Son of man. I concluded, and began again; for it was an accepted time. I do not remember when my mouth was more opened, or my heart more enlarged." On the following morning Grimshaw accompanied him to Heptonstall, where he preached at ten, warning the people not to leave the Church, and then went on his way rejoicing to Ewood. The next day he again stood on a scaffold at Gawksham, near Todmorden, at the foot of what he calls a Welsh mountain, having all the people in

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front, to whom he cried aloud, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The Dissenters had rent the Societies in many places, and had induced numbers converted under the ministry of the Methodists to join their ranks. "I talked largely with Mr. Grimshaw," he writes, "how to remedy the evil. We agreed: 1. That nothing can save the Methodists from falling a prey to every seducer, but close walking with God, in all the commandments and ordinances, especially the word and prayer, private, family, and public. 2. That the preachers should be allowed more time in every place, to visit from house to house, after Mr. Baxter's manner. 3. That a small treatise be written, to ground and preserve them against seducers, and lodged in every family." The same day they rode on to Bolton, and the next to Manchester; and on the following day Charles writes, "I parted with my right hand, my brother and bosom-friend, Grimshaw."* There would be great oneness of affection and harmony of thought between Charles Wesley and Grimshaw; they were alike ardent, impulsive, and devoted to the Church of England. John Wesley was also sincerely anxious to retain the Societies in connexion with the Church; but he was still more anxious to retain them in allegiance to Christ. "I would take some pains," he says, in writing to the Rev. Mr. Clarke about this time, "to recover any one from

* Charles Wesley's Journal.

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error, or to reconcile him to our Church; I mean, to the Church of England; from which I do not separate yet, and probably never shall. But I would take much more pains to recover any one from sin. One who lives and dies in error, or in dissent from our Church, may yet be saved; but one who lives and dies in sin must perish. O sir, let us bend our main force against this: against all sin both in ourselves and them that hear us! I would to God we could all agree both in opinions and outward worship. But, if this cannot be, may we not agree in holiness?"

The following letter was sent by Charles to Grimshaw in the same month:—*

"Manchester, Oct. 29th. I could not leave this poor shattered Society so soon as I proposed. They have not had fair play from our sons in the Gospel, but have been scattered by them as sheep upon the mountains. I have once more persuaded them to go to church and sacrament, and stay to carry them thither the next Lord's day. Nothing but grace can keep our children, after our departure, from running into a thousand sects, a thousand errors. Grace, exercised, kept up, and increased, in the use of all the means, especially family and public prayer, and the sacrament, will keep them steady. Let us labour, while we continue here, to ground and build them up in the Scriptures, and all the ordinances. Teach them to handle well the

* Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley," vol. ii., p. 126.

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sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith. Should I live to see you again, I trust you will assure me there is not a member of the Societies but reads the Scriptures daily, uses private prayer, joins in family and public worship, and communicates constantly. *In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.*"

On Wednesday, May 18, 1757, John Wesley rode from Halifax to Heptonstall, "over the huge but extremely pleasant and fruitful mountains."* A large congregation was waiting for him, not only on the ground, but on the side and tops of the neighbouring houses. We have conversed with persons who remembered his more recent visits to this place. The day of his coming was regarded as a general holiday. The windows of the houses were filled, and the roads crowded, with spectators, eager to catch a smile from the radiant countenance of this venerable man; and, as he approached nearer the chapel, a long row of matrons, in plain but comely apparel, awaited his arrival, into whose extended hands he dropped an alms, and received in return a low courtesy and a fervent blessing. On the present occasion, no scoffer or trifler was seen in the congregation that had assembled. It rained in the adjoining valley, nearly all the time he was preaching; but it was fair on the top of the mountain, and the people listened in comfort.

* Wesley's Journal.

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"What an emblem of God's taking up His people into a place of safety, while the storm falls on all below!" There had been an earthquake here on the preceding day. A strange noise was heard under the ground, compared by some to thunder, and by others to the rumbling of carts. The earth rocked and waved to and fro; pewter and glass clattered upon the shelves; and many persons in the fields felt the ground shake under their feet. About seven on Thursday morning Wesley preached at Ewood, not intending to preach again until the evening; but Grimshaw begged he would give them one sermon at Gawksham: after which they climbed up "the enormous mountain," which he thought equal to any he had seen in Germany, on the brow of which they were saluted by a severe shower, which a high wind drove nearly full in their faces, until they approached Haslingden. Here they learnt that the earthquake had extended from Bingley to Preston, a distance of between fifty and sixty miles. Wesley preached on Friday morning at Padiham, to a large, wild congregation; and about noon at Rough Lee, where, it is painful to learn, those who stood firm in the storm had melted away in the calm. His day's work was not yet done; but at Keighley he had neither strength nor voice left until he began to preach, when he again received both might and utterance. The next day he had "a little Conference of the Preachers," at the same place,

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and in the afternoon he preached at Bingley. "After preaching at five," is his record of the Sabbath, "I took horse for Haworth. A December storm met us upon the mountain; but this did not hinder such a congregation as the church could not contain. I suppose we had near a thousand communicants, and scarce a trifler among them. In the afternoon, the church not containing a third of the people, I was constrained to be in the churchyard. The rain began as soon as I began to speak: but they regarded it not; for God sent into their hearts

> 'The former and the latter rain,
> The love of God and love of man.'"

It was on the 21st of July, in this year, the letter was written, whence an extract has already been inserted, to Thomas Lee. The writer further says: "It is about two years since I wrote to you. How fast does time slide away! My long silence, however, has not been owing to any disrespect that I have for you, God knoweth, but to neglect of writing, chiefly; for which I must beg your pardon. My heart is as cordially knit to you as ever, if not more so. I respect sincerely your soul, your body, your doctrine, your labour, your conduct, &c. What can I do more, Tommy? Let us talk no more of these matters. Here, I hope, things go pretty well. How go they where you have been? Our congregations have been for some time, and still are

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in several places of this round, large. Several souls are added, and some are seemingly just awaking. James Oddie and Jonathan Maskew have been our preachers for some time. James is gone to the Conference; and Jonathan, if he recover not, will shortly go to heaven.....You will remember me kindly to Rebecca; but, especially, kindly remember me at the footstool of grace. I have done so daily for you, above two years. May the Lord bless you, yours, and your labours! Pray, therefore, for me, and I will pray for thee; being your affectionate brother, W. G."

Not knowing what might be the character of the incumbent who would be appointed to succeed him when he had gone to receive his reward in heaven, and being anxious that the preaching of evangelical truth should be perpetuated in Haworth, he was the means, in 1758, of the erection of a chapel, which he made over to the Methodists. The services had previously been held, for the most part, in his own kitchen. In the Stewards' Book at Keighley there is the following entry:—"January 18, 1759. It was this day resolved by the Preachers and the Stewards of this Round, that the sum of £2. 16*s.* 8½*d.* at the foot of this quarter's account, and lodged in the hands of William Grimshaw, Minister of Haworth, shall be disposed of by the said William Grimshaw, in defraying the charges

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of building the preaching-house at Haworth; as witness our hands the day and year above-said. Alexander Coates, James Oddie, Thomas Colbeck, William Greenwood, Parson Greenwood, Samuel Fielden."

The following letter was written to "Mr. George Merryweather, in Yarm."* In Wesley's Works there are several letters written by him to the same person, extending in date from 1758 to 1786.

"*Haworth, June 22d*, 1759.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I am sorry I have no more leisure to write a longer letter to you, being in haste to set out to meet Mr. Whitefield, who, God willing, preaches here both forenoon and afternoon of Sunday next. My journey into the north was quite agreeable to myself: may it prove profitable to the souls of many! To the Lord be the glory! Whether I may have the pleasure to visit you again this season, I dare not certainly say; as I have various parts to visit this summer. This, however, I shall be better able to determine at Conference.

"I beseech you, dear brother, by the mercies of God, that as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, you may so walk in Him. If you be

* Methodist Magazine for 1826, p. 171.

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in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit. Happy are you in this case; yea, blessed are you, that have the Lord for your God; even Jesus for your 'wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' What He is, He will be to you for ever. What He has begun, He will accomplish in you. 'Faithful is He who hath promised, who also will do it.' He hath made unto you, upon the faithfulness of God, all His promises yea and amen. Yea, all things are yours, and you are Christ's, as He is God's. Give all diligence, therefore, to make your calling and election sure. Remember, study, apply well to heart and practice, that golden climax, that divine gradation of St. Peter, 2 Epist. i. 5—7; and then see how it will be with you; ver. 8th; that you may be a burning and shining light in your generation. And as it has pleased our Redeemer, not only to implant His divine nature in your heart, but to put His word also into your mouth, speak and spare not. Exercise your talent to the uttermost, and you shall always see, as I dare say you have already done, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

"Let you and me keep close to every ordinance of God, and to every means of grace. Let us diligently converse with the word of God. Let us treasure it up in our memory, as a magazine to our hearts. Let us also watch unto prayer, and continue therein. I commend you to the

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mercy of God, and to the word of His grace. Pray for me, and I will pray for you; being your obliged, affectionate, and sincere friend and brother,

"W. GRIMSHAW."

On Friday, the 20th of July, 1759, Wesley preached at Colne, in an open space, not far from the main street. He had seldom seen a more attentive or decently-behaved congregation. "How is the scene changed, since the drunken mob of this town used to be a terror to all the country!" In the afternoon he preached at Broad Clough, "a lone house, in the midst of the Lancashire mountains." "Mr. Grimshaw," he writes on Saturday the 21st, "led us to Gawksham, another lone house, on the side of an enormous mountain. The congregation stood and sat, row above row, in the sylvan theatre. I believe nothing on the postdiluvian earth can be more pleasant than the road from hence, between huge, steep mountains, clothed with wood to the top, and washed at the bottom by a clear, winding stream. At four I preached to a very large congregation at Heptonstall, and thence rode on to Haworth.—Sunday, 22. At ten Mr. Milner read prayers, but the church would not near contain the congregation; so, after prayers, I stood on a scaffold close to the church, and the congregation in the churchyard. The communicants alone filled the church. In the

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afternoon the congregation was nearly doubled; and yet most of these were not curious hearers, but men fearing God." The next day he preached near Huddersfield, to the wildest congregation he had seen in Yorkshire.

In September, 1760, Grimshaw met the Rev. W. Romaine, lecturer of St. Dunstan's, at Aberford, the residence of the Inghams. This devoted minister was called upon to suffer much for the truth's sake. He had often to preach in his own church by the light of a single candle, which he held in his hand, as the churchwardens would neither light the church nor suffer it to be lighted. He consented to preach at Haworth, and there was a very numerous assemblage. Grimshaw read prayers in the church, after which he announced that his brother Romaine would preach the glorious Gospel from brother Whitefield's pulpit in the churchyard. Romaine complied with the request, and preached a most powerful sermon, though averse to open-air services.*

In the same year, John Newton, afterwards rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, and the biographer of Grimshaw, visited Haworth. He was at this time seeking ordination in the Established Church, and frequently preached for Ingham and Grimshaw. In a letter to John Wesley,† dated Nov. 14, 1760, he says: "I forgot to tell you in

* Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, cap. xvi.

† Methodist Magazine for 1780, p. 441.

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my last that I had the honour to appear as a Methodist preacher. I was at Haworth; Mr. Grimshaw was pressing, and prevailed. I spoke in his house to about one hundred and fifty persons,—a difficult auditory, in my circumstances, about half Methodists and half Baptists. I was afraid of displeasing both sides: but my text, John i. 29, led me to dwell upon a point in which we were all agreed; and before I had leisure to meddle with doctrines, as they are called, the hour was expired. In short, it was a comfortable opportunity." Mr. Newton might have been induced to attach himself more closely to the Methodists, but there were grave considerations that made him pause before throwing himself into the itinerancy. Among these he enumerates—a broken constitution; insufficiency of strength in body or mind; the fact that riding an hour in the rain, or more than thirty miles in a day, unfitted him for anything; the possession of a present maintenance; the care for his wife and an orphan sister; and the contrary spirit of many of the preachers. "So that, though I love the Methodists," he says, "and vindicate them from unjust aspersions upon all occasions, and suffer the reproach of the world for being one myself, yet it seems not practicable for me to join them further than I do."

On the 27th of March, 1760, Charles Wesley wrote an alarming letter to Grimshaw from

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London.* Fresh fears had arisen in his mind, from the supposed progress of the Methodists towards open Dissent. In his zeal for the Church, Charles sent letters to several of his friends, sharply reprehensive of certain innovations that had recently taken place, and enclosing copies of a pamphlet published by his brother, entitled "Reasons against Separation from the Church." "Three of our steadiest preachers," he says, "give the sacrament at Norwich, with no other ordination or authority than a sixpenny license. My brother approves of it. All the rest will most probably follow their example. What, then, must be the consequence? Not only separation, but general confusion, and the destruction of the work, so far as it depends on the Methodists.....I am convinced things are come to a crisis. We must now resolve either to separate from the Church, or to continue in it the rest of our days. If pride and the enemy did not precipitate them, our preachers would infallibly find the door into the outward ministry opened to them soon. Such as addict themselves to the service of the Dissenters, we should let depart in peace. Such as dare trust God, and venture themselves in the same bottom with us, we should cherish them as sons, and do our utmost for them as to soul, body, and estate. But this I insist upon: Every preacher must know his own mind and his brethren's; must be able to

* Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley," vol. ii., p. 187.

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answer, 'What will become of me after our fathers are gone? Must not I become either a Dissenting or Church minister? Which would I choose?' To have them and things as they are, is to betray our charge, to undermine the Church, and, as far as in us lies, to destroy the work of God."

The three preachers who had transgressed at Norwich were Paul Greenwood, John Murlin, and Thomas Mitchell. The first had been one of Grimshaw's own "men," and the last had been converted under his ministry. The letter of Charles Wesley was written in a moment of excitement, and some of his statements require to be modified, or entirely set aside. The sixpenny licenses had no more to do with the administration of the sacraments by the preachers than had the colour of their coats: they were taken out in self-defence, to preserve them from the violence of the mob. The scheme to secure for them episcopal ordination was impracticable. No bishop could have been found to confer it, without exacting from them promises, and placing upon them restrictions, to which they could not have consented with a good conscience. And, if it had even been possible to secure this mode of ordination for every member of the Conference, the consequences would have been most disastrous; as most of the persons who had been converted under their ministry would have viewed this act as a simoniacal betrayal of their trust. A few would thereby have been driven to

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strong and stern dissent, whilst the greater number would have placed themselves under pastors of their own appointment, and a church would have been instituted entirely inimical to the Establishment. The Methodists now occupy a *via media*, neither calling themselves Dissenters nor Churchmen; proverbially, a secondary position, in the estimation of men who go to extremes on either hand. But to human opinion, and to the suggestions of the mere partisan, they pay little regard in this important question; asking only, with the stricken persecutor, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?"

The reply of Grimshaw was immediate, and in its tone all that his correspondent, though so earnest a guardian of the interests of the Church, could wish. It was sent by the hand of Thomas Colbeck, who was visiting London. He recited the difficulties in which he had been placed by his irregular proceedings, and expressed strong disapproval of the acts mentioned to him by Charles. "I little thought," he proceeds to say, "that your brother approved or connived at the preachers' doings at Norwich. If it be so, 'To your tents, O Israel!' It is time for me to shift for myself; to disown all connexion with the Methodists; to stay at home, and take care of my parish; or to preach abroad in such places as are unlicensed, and to such people as are in connexion with us. I have no intention to preach the less; but to exert myself, as far as I am able,

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for the salvation of sinners. I hereby therefore assure you, that I disclaim all further and future connexion with the Methodists. I will quietly recede, without noise or tumult. No one, mindful to continue with them, shall be either directly or indirectly hindered by me. I have other reasons, sir, for leaving the Methodists, besides the above, which I shall not mention now.

"In general, as to the licensing of preachers and places, I know no expedient to prevent it. The thing is gone too far. It is become inveterate. It has been gradually growing to this ever since erecting preaching-houses was first encouraged in the land; and if you can stem the torrent, by dint of persuasion, or some other influence you may have over some of the preachers, it will be only during your own lives. So soon as you are dead, all the preachers will do as many have already done; and even while you live the licensed preachers, though they continue with you, will do worse than after your death. For now, even upon their sixpenny license, they will dare to administer the sacraments: whereas then they will qualify themselves farther for it, by obtaining Presbyterian ordination. Dissenters the Methodists will all shortly be: it cannot, I am fully satisfied, be prevented.

"Nor is this spirit merely in the preachers. It is in the people also. There are so many inconveniences attend the people, that in most places they all plead strenuously for a settled

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ministry. They cannot, they say, in conscience receive the sacraments as administered in our Church. They cannot attend preaching at eight, twelve, and four o'clock, on Lord's days, and go to church. They reason these things with the preachers, and urge them upon ordination and residence. They can object little against it, how little soever their minds are inclined to it. Therefore they license. For my part, though I do not approve of everything in our Liturgy, yet I see nothing so materially amiss in it, or our Church constitution, as to disturb my conscience to that degree, as to justify my separation from her. No: where shall I go to mend myself? I believe the Church of England to be the soundest, purest, and most apostolical well-constituted national Christian Church in the world. Therefore I can in good conscience (as I am determined, God willing, to do) live and die in her. But my conscience is not another man's. I believe the Methodists (preachers and members) have so much to say for their separation from our Church, as will not easily, in a Conference or otherwise, be obviated."

The writer of this letter becomes calmer as he proceeds, and as he gets further away from the influence of the invective from his reverend brother in London; until he becomes almost an apologist for the course taken by the preachers. There is some truth in his forethinkings as to the position his old friends would assume after

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Wesley's death; but his more gloomy anticipations were not confirmed by the event. The "sixpenny licenses" were not regarded as conferring the power to administer the sacraments, nor did the preachers seek Presbyterian ordination. He condemns the erection of meeting-houses, and yet he himself had recently built one not far from his own church; in the year previous to his death he preached at the opening of a Methodist chapel at Thorner; and only a few weeks before his labours ceased, as we shall presently see, he solicited subscriptions for the erection of an Independent chapel at Halifax. On further reflection, he must have altered the resolution he had formed when writing to Charles; probably from discovering that the affairs of the Society were not in so much confusion as had been supposed by his nervous correspondent; and we find no subsequent change in his mode of procedure, either as relates to his irregular raids or his association with the Methodists.

The determination of Charles to prolong, as far as possible, the union of the Methodists with the Establishment, coupled with the influence of Grimshaw, and of the other clergymen by whom Wesley was assisted, was not without its benefit in retarding their more formal separation until the organization of their Society, at first imperfect and uncertain, was sufficiently firm and consolidated to enable it to become a distinct branch of the church of Christ, with the exercise

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of a regular and watchful discipline, and the reverent administration of the ordinances. But both Charles Wesley and William Grimshaw were as really forming bodies of separatists, in every place they visited, and by every effort they used to raise and support the Societies they formed, as the humblest of the lay preachers who had gone forth from the quarry or the plough. When we see clouds, like those we have noticed, gather upon the brow of such men as the poet of Methodism and the incumbent of Haworth, we are led the more to reflect, how remarkably gifted of God was John Wesley. Whatever provocation he met with; however powerful the influence brought into exercise to stay him in his course; however many, or respectable, or useful, the friends who forsook him in his difficulties, and became traitors to the cause; he is never once offended, or discomposed, or mistrustful: he is still serene as the mountain-girt lake, upon which not a foam-belt forms or a ripple stirs; and yet he is ever progressive, as the wave of the rising tide upon the shingle of the shore.

In the same letter, Grimshaw gives other reasons for dissatisfaction; one of which arose from the indiscretion of certain individuals who professed to have attained to what he calls "sinless perfection." "My perfection is," he says, "to see my own imperfection; my comfort, to feel that I have the world, flesh, and devil to overthrow through the Spirit and merits of my dear Saviour;

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and my desire and hope is, to love God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength, to the last gasp of life. This is my perfection. I know no other, expecting to lay down my life and my sword together." In the attainment and constant enjoyment of the privileges here enumerated, Wesley himself would have said that what he regarded as Christian perfection consisted;—not an absolute perfection, but a relative one; a freedom from the power of sinful volition, "*every* thought" being brought into captivity "to the obedience of Christ;" but no such attainment as excludes progress in wisdom, strength, purity, and love. It was to the unguarded expressions of mistaken men, or perhaps to reports altogether unfounded, that Grimshaw took exception, rather than to the doctrine as expounded in the standards of Methodism. They who had attained to this high and holy privilege were cautioned by Wesley not to speak of it "to any without some particular reason, without some particular good in view; and then they should have an especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting, and to speak more loudly and convincingly by their lives than they can do by their tongues."

Not long afterwards, opportunity was presented of further instruction upon this great and important subject. Wesley preached at Haworth on Sunday, July 12th, 1761; there being the usual scaffold, the congregation in the churchyard, and the immense multitude. "What has

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God wrought in the midst of those rough mountains!" "At five, on Monday," says Wesley,* "I preached on the manner of waiting for perfect love; the rather to satisfy Mr. Grimshaw, whom many had laboured to puzzle and perplex about it. So once more their bad labour was lost, and we were more united both in heart and judgment than ever." At noon on the same day he preached at Colne, once inaccessible to the Gospel, but now he believed he might have stood up at the Cross without the least interruption. The next morning he preached at Bentley-Wood Green, on, "Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Grimshaw afterwards told him, that "this perfection he firmly believed, and daily prayed for; namely, the love of God and man, producing all those fruits which are described in our Lord's sermon upon the mount." This was probably the last occasion on which these laborious ministers met in this world. They were now happily one, both in sentiment and service; they were knit to each other as David and Jonathan,

"Heart to heart, as lute to lute."

Their last colloquy on earth was of love, and their next meeting was in the land where all is love, limitless, and for ever.

About this time George Lowe, who afterwards became a Wesleyan minister, and died in 1839, in the eighty-ninth year of his age, went to Stock-

* Wesley's Journal.

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port, to hear Grimshaw preach.* As he was going up the street, a woman threw open the window, and cried out, "Thou young snake, art thou leaving the Church, and going after these Methodists?" The small chapel, with its gallery, was excessively crowded. The same evening, Grimshaw preached at the chapel in High-street, Manchester, the only one in the town. Before he ascended the pulpit, the steward, usually called Dicky Barlow, called him aside, and said, "Sir, we feel exceedingly obliged by your kindness in coming to preach to us on this occasion; but allow me to observe that our people here have a great deal of preaching, and a great dislike to long preaching. When our venerable father Wesley comes, he generally concludes the service within the hour." Grimshaw instantly replied, "Mr. Wesley, God bless him! He can do more in one hour than I can in two." Under this impression, he preached just two hours. From the sight of a single bone, Cuvier told the shape and size of an entire animal, previously unknown; and from this single anecdote, it would not be very difficult to tell the entire character, both of watchful steward and lowly minister. Wesley would scarcely regard himself as a "venerable father" at the age of fifty-seven. Five years after, Charles, writing of him, says, "He is an astonishing youth, and may be saluted like the eastern monarch, 'O king, live for ever!'"

* Strachan's "Life and Times of the Rev. George Lowe."

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Our next vision of Grimshaw is at Barnard-Castle, in the county of Durham, where he preached in the open air, very near the Old Meeting-House, on what was then a common, and called the Crook.* Of this visit no further particulars can be gleaned. To this place, Methodism had been brought from Leeds; it had been visited by Wesley and Whitefield; and its members had already many stirring traditions, about which to speak, of noble men and women who had been raised up among them by God, and of the adventures, mishaps, interpositions, persecutions, and successes with which the progress of the work had been attended.

In a letter written to the Societies in Newcastle, &c., on the 12th of January, 1762, Grimshaw says:†—"I hope, and God grant I may always have the comfort to hear, that the work of God prospers in your parts. Praised be His name, it does so here! We have lately had many members added to our Societies. There is just now a stirring among the people in my parish, such as has not been for twelve years past. I mention this for the glory of God, and for your joy: and I do it for a further reason, which, I am persuaded, upon trial you will find true. I observe that when the Societies are circumspect in life and conversation, diligent in every means of

* Steele's "Methodism in Barnard-Castle."

† Methodist Magazine for 1794, p. 498.

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grace, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, He frequently, I had almost said continually, is adding souls to them: but not so where they are in a lukewarm, negligent, and disorderly state. I think I may thus account for the present revival among us.

"If, upon trial, (as I dare say you will,) you find this observation true; then I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that as the glory of God, the edifying of His church, and the conversion of sinners, should ever be nearest your heart, and it should be your reasonable and grateful service as much as possible to promote it, let your conversation be at all times, and in all respects, as becomes the Gospel. Consider yourselves to be as a city on a hill, or as a candle on a candlestick; and that you are to let your light so shine before men, that they may by a speedy and sincere conversion, be prevailed upon, both here and in heaven, to glorify your heavenly Father."

In the same year he addressed a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, eminently illustrative of several of the principal features in his character; simplicity, humility, earnestness, and a charity unconfined by the limits of party or church:—

"MADAM,—Your last letter has remained a long time unanswered: but I know you will excuse what may appear neglect, when informed that I have been about my Master's business.

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Indeed, I have the pleasure of assuring you that the Lord's work prospers amazingly among us. My exhortations are visibly blessed, and I bless God daily and hourly for it. The Societies are everywhere in a good state. The Lord is adding to them many seekers of the blessed Jesus,—many lively souls who have come to a sense of the pardoning love of God, and are eagerly hungering and thirsting after your inestimable Redeemer and mine.

"I have had two visits from Mr. Knight. He professed great love and respect for your Ladyship, and acknowledges his deep obligations for the light and knowledge you were instrumental in communicating to him. He is actively labouring to rescue sin-slaved souls from the kingdom of darkness, and the Lord has put honour on his testimony, by giving him seals to his ministry. The people amongst whom he is sowing the seed of the kingdom are poor, their means are very limited, yet the Lord has put it into their hearts to build a house for the preaching of the word. Now I have come to the point:—Can your Ladyship spare a mite to aid these worthy souls? The demands on your generosity I know to be great, and on that account I feel a repugnance at asking, because I am persuaded you would give, even to the gown on your back, if the case required it. Blessed be God, who has furnished you with means, and with a heart inclined to dispense the unrighteous mammon for the good of others. But

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you are the Lord's, all you have is His; and bless and praise Him night and day for employing you in His service. May He bless you, sanctify you, and make you abundantly useful in your day and generation! He has raised you up for the accomplishment of a mighty work in the land: I may not live to witness it, but I shall assuredly see some of the triumphs of the Cross, the blood-bought slaves, the ransomed captives, rescued from the tyranny and slavery of the great enemy of souls, in the chapels of your Ladyship, all arrayed in robes of dazzling white, and washed from every defilement in the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, praising and blessing Him who hath made them kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever. Yes, when I am before the throne—then I shall see, and hear, and know what you have been made the instrument of accomplishing on earth; and at last we shall meet as *two poor worthless sinners*, stripped of every fancied good, to bless and praise Him through eternity.

"I hope ere long to see my dear brother Whitefield in his own pulpit again. When will your Ladyship revive us with another visit? What blessings did the Lord shower upon us the last time you were here! and how did our hearts burn within us to proclaim His love and grace to perishing sinners! Come and animate us afresh; aid us by your counsels and your prayers; communicate a spark of your

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glowing zeal, and stir us up to renewed activity in the cause of God. All the dear apostles go on well, all pray for your dear Ladyship, and all long for your coming amongst us again. I have been a long round since you were here, and have seen brothers Ingham, Venn, Conyers, and Bentley, all alive, and preaching Christ crucified with wonderful success, and inexpressible benefit to the souls of many.

"Excuse this long incoherent scribble; and assure yourself, I am your Ladyship's very unworthy and unprofitable friend and brother,

"WILLIAM GRIMSHAW.

"*Haworth, November 20th*, 1762."

Titus Knight received his first religious impressions among the Methodists, and was for some time one of their preachers: but, as he differed from Wesley on the subject of entire holiness, a separation took place, and a chapel was built for him in Halifax. The author of the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," to whom we are indebted for this letter, is pleased to call "Christian perfection" an "error," though professing to believe the Scriptures, Matt. v. 48, Col. i. 28, 1 Thess. v. 23; and here, as well as elsewhere, there are remarks which from their narrowness of view, and authoritativeness of tone, would have been better fitted for a bull from the seven-hilled city than for the pen of "a cadet of the houses of Shirley

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and Hastings;" thus marring one of the most interesting works connected with the religious gossip of modern times.

In less than six months from the date of the above letter, the hand that wrote it had forgot its cunning. In it we have its writer brought vividly before us, his heart still full of zeal and love; yearning for the salvation of souls with all the anxiety of a miser who seeks to clutch gold; exulting in the continued progress of the Gospel, with the joy of the warrior who is welcomed home by a grateful country after having gained extensive conquests; and not merely thankful for the successes of the past or the prospects of the present, but, after having spent many long years in the service, as ready as when he first belted on his armour, again to take the field, and scour away over rough road and broad moor, to carry the glad tidings of salvation to some far-away village, its name unrecorded on our maps; or to the ignorant masses of some neglected town, slumbering in the death-dream of sin.

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CHAPTER XII.

PASTORAL LETTERS.

At a time when the word steam-engine was unknown, and the word mill meant only a sluggish wheel for the grinding of corn; when the railroad was undreamt of, and no telegraph-wire intersected the country; when the prediction of the establishment of a penny postage would have been classed with the prophecies of Mother Shipton or Old Merlin; when the statement that there would be a penny newspaper, published daily, with more matter in it than an old magazine, and sold by hundreds of thousands, would have been thought an unbelievable exaggeration; when intelligence passed from one end of the island to the other less rapidly than now from one end of the world to the other;—the social circumstances of the people were so different from our own, who live in the later half of the nineteenth century, that it is difficult for us to imagine ourselves in the midst of scenes so quiet and witless. The minister or lecturer can now appear in some hall of our northern metropolis in the evening, and the next morning breakfast in London, with comparatively little fatigue. It is not requisite that on his visits to the country he

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should pack up his saddle-bags with all sorts of oddities, and proceed onward from town to town, in slow succession. Faithful ministers are now so numerous that their "rounds" are every day more and more circumscribed, and their appearance before the same congregation has thereby become proportionately more frequent. But in the days of Grimshaw the labourers were few, the field was wide, and the people could only hear a sermon after long intervals, or by taking long journeys. Yet, from the scantiness of their knowledge of Divine things, they needed line upon line, and precept upon precept, that they might be prevented from falling into error, and be preserved in the enjoyment of the privileges they had received. Hence the value of the letters, epistles, and pastoral addresses, which it was the custom to read to the Societies, when there was no one to proclaim the living word, or make personal appeal to the conscience.

The following extracts from Grimshaw's letters to various Societies will be read with interest and profit in the present day. At the time they were written, they were listened to with breathless attention by those to whom they were addressed: hands unaccustomed to hold the pen copied them out in strange and uncouth characters; they were treasured in the memory, like the words of a much-loved friend; and when the favoured individual who could repeat them visited some distant locality, he was regarded as one whose lot

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was to be envied, as he recited them to some rustic circle. The writings of Grimshaw are not printed in a separate form, and, if not appended to his Biographies, would be lost to the church. On this account, in the present and other instances, we have inserted extracts from them at greater length than might otherwise have been required.

Writing to Wesley on the 27th of November, 1747, he says: "I beg you will present my hearty respects to all your Societies, classes, &c., in London or elsewhere, in the following manner.

"1. To believers: Dear souls, I frequently have you in my thoughts, and wonder how your hearts are disposed towards our Saviour! Do you still continue fervent in spirit serving the Lord? Is He still the most precious, the more you experience of His grace? Or, like the ungrateful Israelites, which God forbid, do you begin to loathe the heavenly manna? Sure the more you feel by faith the virtue of the blood and righteousness of our dear Saviour, the more you are filled with the love of God, and the sweet consolations of the Holy Ghost. For, as our Lord truly affirms the kingdom of God is within you; so that kingdom is asserted by St. Paul to be righteousness, (and then) peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The more therefore you feel of this, the more will you rejoice, and the more will you hunger and thirst thereafter. Which if you do,

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'Blessed are you,' says our Lord, 'for you shall be filled.' Loth would I think, but that this is the disposition of your hearts, who have received the pardoning love of God our Saviour. O, may you be affected with an insatiable appetite for a Saviour's graces, daily more and more! How will the for-ever-blessed THREE rejoice to see it, and rejoice to satisfy it! Therefore, 'ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find.' The more you enjoy of God's grace, the more will He endue you therewith. He gives plentifully, and upbraideth no man. 'To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.' God's treasury never fails, how much soever goes out of it. Nor doth He ever tire with giving; if you never tire with asking, and carefully improve what He gives. O, may you receive abundantly at this all-bounteous hand, and may you never fail, nor faint, whilst breath lasts, to improve it to the donor's glory, and your own everlasting benefit!

"2. To seekers: And supposing some of you are but yet seeking the Lord, and have never felt His pardoning love, nor the joy which follows: supposing you are mourning under the load of sin, or panting for a deliverance through a Saviour: courage, dear souls, and despair not. He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. The bruised reed He will not break; the smoking flax He will not quench. No, no, He has wounded you, on purpose to bind you up.

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To you He has made a promise. Blessed are you that mourn, for ye shall be comforted. This holy David well knew: Psalm cxvi. 5. 'Come unto me,' cries our Lord, 'all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' What though you cannot, as yet with children, cry, *Abba, Father;* though with them you, as yet, perceive not yourselves set down to the full meal of your heavenly Father's table; though you may think you are looked upon, at present, but as dogs, as indeed what are any of us better by nature, than dogs living upon our vomit? Yet, with the Syro-Phœnician woman, think well to be called dogs, (sincere contrition for sins will readily bear the name,) and then have you hereby a title to the crumbs which fall from your Master's table. Claim but the dog's portion; beg but to live under the table, and then shall you shortly partake of the children's loaf. A broken and contrite heart He will not despise: Psalm li. 17. You shall quickly hear your Master say, as He did to the woman: O My precious mourning souls! 'great is your faith. Be it unto you' (mark the next words) 'even as thou wilt!'

"To Him I heartily commend you all, being one who have, I trust, received grace, and am determined through my Saviour's never-failing assistance to live and die in His service; as, I hope, you all are, or else woe be to you."

"SUFFER the word of exhortation: it comes

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from one whose desire is this, even your salvation: but with whom shall I begin? With those that are seeking; or with those that have found the Lord? With the former first. All out of Christ are in nature. All in nature are in hell. For hell is nothing, chiefly, but a state of alienation of the soul from God, in time and eternity, through the fall of Adam: or, as the apostle speaks, a being 'without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world.' This is hell. Hither comes the Holy Spirit. Here He finds us; or we had been eternally damned. Here He awakes us. All the difference between an awakened and an unawakened soul is, the one sees himself in hell, the other does not.

"Are you sensible you are in hell? Are you groaning under the dreadful apprehensions of God's wrath, the law's curse, and eternal damnation? It is well. You were never nearer the kingdom of God than now. Your extremity is God's opportunity. Read, hear, pray, meditate, and that diligently; and by and by the Lord will visit you with His saving health. Christ came to seek and save the lost. He will be found of them who diligently seek Him. For who ever sought His face in vain? If He willingly shed His precious blood, and wrought out an all-perfect righteousness for you, when dead in trespasses and sins; yea, before you had any being; then fear not, He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

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"But have you found the Lord? Have you experienced the pangs of the new birth? Is Christ made unto you of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption? Are you washed in His precious blood? clothed with His righteousness? and inspired with the Holy Spirit? Glory be to God for this! What shall I say to you?—you, who are thus far advanced, thus highly honoured, through free redeeming grace. Keep close to all the means of grace; to the word of God, to meditation, self-examination, contemplation, and prayer. The more you do, the faster shall you attain to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

"At present you are apt to be beset with temptations, conflicts, darkness, down-castings, lusts, unbelief, hardness of heart, &c., and every other corruption. This is well also. Plunge forward. I could rejoice, were I with you, to hear you complain and whine at these things. I would do by you, as lawyers by their clients: pity you to your face, and laugh at your back. 'O, but,' say you, 'I see more lust, more pride, more unbelief, &c., in me, than ever.' This indeed is an ugly sight, but a good sign. Strong then may your faith be, and greater your grace. Dark dirty places are best discerned by sunshine. It is not because your corruptions are stronger now, than before; but because your light and sight in the Spirit is clearer. A small lust, or but slightly felt now, will appear more frightful,

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than a far greater measure of it, under less grace. Never therefore is faith stronger, nor grace fuller, than when you feel most of your filthiness, weakness, and unworthiness, provided that, as is the sight of your corruptions, such be your abhorrence of them, and industry to get rid of them. Otherwise your light will wane, and your grace decay. For truly for these ends doth the Holy Ghost discover your corruptions to you, to keep you humble, to make you lean upon Christ Jesus, to pray for His assistance, and thereby to strive to overcome them.

"Again, therefore, I say unto you, keep close to the means of grace. Drop these, and you drop all your communion with God. Whereas, they who wait on the Lord shall surely renew their strength, and be more than conquerors. Let me beg of you to attend class-meetings constantly. Great are the blessings you gain thereby. Count it an inestimable happiness, the oftener the better, to attend public preaching. God's word is spirit and life. Esteem every sacrament-day as a feast-day to your souls; for Jesu's flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed, even to eternal life.

"Lastly: let the effect of all be this, a conversation becoming the Gospel. O, mind, mind, mind 2 Peter i. 5—8. The Lord make you burning and shining lights in your generation! God bless you, establish, strengthen, settle you, in all grace and holiness. O that you may be

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holy, as God is holy; and perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect! Always bear in mind, that a main design of Christianity is to make the regenerate holy here, and eternally happy hereafter.

"The work of God greatly flourishes in these parts. Glory be to God for it! And let all His people say, Amen."—*Letter addressed "To a Christian Society," dated Ewood, February* 21, 1754.

"You that can say, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,' happy are you. 'Tis from experience only that we can truly say so. Blessed are the people that are in such a case; who through faith in Jesus are already saved from the guilt, and power, and curse of sin; and, if you continue faithful to the end, you shall be eternally saved from wrath and hell. Through the operations and influence of the Holy Spirit, you have the knowledge of pardon, and the sense of that peace which passes all understanding. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Through the Holy Ghost dwelling in you, you have power over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Life eternal, heaven, glory, is in you already begun: hence, and only hence, spring love, joy, and peace, and cheerful, sincere, universal, evangelical obedience to God. By this you feelingly, as well as scripturally, find that holiness is the end as well as the happiness

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of a Christian. Stand fast, therefore, my dear brethren, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free. And as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, who is in you the hope of glory, so walk ye in Him, till grace terminates in glory, and present holiness in eternal happiness.

"Shall I need to exhort you to this? Holiness should be the natural, necessary consequence of regeneration. True; but yet we have need to exhort, and to be exhorted. St. Peter would not be negligent to put the churches in remembrance of these things. I beseech you therefore, brethren, in his own words, 'Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"Our duty may be considered in a four-fold relation: 1. To God. 2. Our brethren. 3. Our neighbour. 4. Ourselves.

"1. To God: Three in One. Him, whether as Father, Saviour, Sanctifier, we should love and serve with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Through His all-sufficient grace, we must walk in all His ordinances and commandments blameless. This must be done incessantly, invariably,

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universally, cordially, cheerfully, all the days of our appointed time, until our change come. But when we have done all, it is infinitely short of His due.

"2. To our brethren: They are partakers with us of the Divine nature, and fellow-heirs of the same hope. We should love them as Christ loved us; we should delight in them, associate with them, and unite in prayer, and praising the same Lord together; communicate in the same ordinances, and in the same holy supper; mutually build each other up in our most holy faith; instruct, exhort, admonish, as persons and circumstances from time to time require; recover backsliders, quicken triflers, strengthen the weak, succour the tempted, comfort the mourners; and in the spirit of meekness and love, become all things to all, that we may be edified and saved.

"3. To our neighbour; all men: We should be as a lighted candle set upon a candlestick; so letting our light shine before them, that they, seeing our good works, may be convinced and converted, and thereby, with us, glorify our Father who is in heaven. In common life, take care to do justice and show mercy to them. This from us is their right; and thus we may possibly win their souls to God. In religious life, we should behave in an even, unwearied, devout, and zealous exercise of every means of grace and ordinance of our holy religion before

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them; labouring on all occasions to convince them of our good-will towards them, and our unfeigned desire to promote their temporal and eternal welfare.

"4. To ourselves: As the beloved of the Father, the redeemed of the Son, and the sanctified by the Holy Spirit, we should be followers of God as dear children: our meat and drink must be to do His will. His will is this, even our sanctification. We must live a just and honest, a sober and temperate life; walking before God and man in all wisdom and prudence, humility and meekness, chastity and purity, seriousness and steadiness, that we may adorn the Gospel of our Redeemer in all things, and be made meet to obtain an inheritance with the saints in glory.

"I hope the Gospel spreads in your parts, and that the Societies increase in grace and number: since Christmas, blessed be the Lord, fifty new members have been added to ours. O that the leaven in every place may leaven the whole lump!"—*Letter addressed "To the Societies in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the Neighbourhood," dated Haworth, May* 1, 1758.

"I UNDERSTAND by brother Darney, the bearer hereof, that you entertained an expectation of my visiting your parts this summer; and indeed, for some time, I warmly purposed the same: but may I not say, that though man purposes, yet the Lord disposes. It has so fallen out, that I

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could not conveniently come. The same ardent desire, that at times, for years past, I have had of visiting the North, still abides; and therefore who knows, but I may see you, the Lord willing, next summer?

"You, to whom it is given to believe in the Lord Jesus, lean continually, through faith and hope, on the faithfulness, immutability, promises, grace, and love, of this dear, this all-sufficient Redeemer. Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering, and He will never leave you, nor forsake you. For near twenty years, I have found Him, by blessed experience, faithful to His promises. I cannot, I will not, I dare not doubt, (and why should you?) but that, through grace, I shall receive the end of my faith, the salvation of my soul. Let us read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the gracious, glorious word of God. Let us diligently and fervently watch and pray, and the God of grace and peace will be with us.

"You, on whose hearts the Sun of Righteousness begins to arise, fear not. By that light you see your guilt, natural corruption, and self-inability. Satan, by many subtle reasonings, will endeavour to terrify you with dreadful apprehensions of God's holy law, justice, wrath, and hell. But I say unto you, Be not dismayed; your terror and sorrow will be only for a season. These painful exercises are frequently experienced by those persons whom Jesus is drawing to the

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fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. You shall soon be enabled to say from the heart,

> 'Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> 'Midst flaming worlds in these array'd,
> With joy shall I lift up my head.'

"Diligently use all the means of grace; for although they are not meritorious, yet nevertheless they are of Divine appointment, and channels whereby the Lord conveys His blessings to our souls. May our gracious Lord be your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He has begun a good work in you; and if you continue faithful to the Divine light which hath visited your dark souls, He will finish it in righteousness. The Lord hath promised to comfort all penitent mourners; and He cannot lie, He will not deceive you. Reason not with flesh and blood; regard not the suggestions of old Satan, for he was a liar from the beginning. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

"Brother Darney's labours have been useful in these parts: may they be blessed among you. May Jesus, my dear, dear Master, bless you all." —*Letter addressed "To the Christian Brethren in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and elsewhere in the North," dated Haworth, October* 18, 1758.

"GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus. It is well with four sorts of people, that you have had, or

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now have, to do with. It is well with those of you in Christ *who are gone to God:* it is well with those of you in Christ *who are not gone to God:* it is well with those who earnestly *long to be in Christ*, that they may go to God. It is well for those who *neither desire to be in Christ, nor to go to God.* And 'tis only bad with such who, being out of Christ, are gone to the devil. These 'tis best to let alone, and say no more about them.

"But, to be sure, it is well with the other four. It is well with those of you who, being *in Christ, are gone to God.* You ministers and members of Christ, have no more doubt or pain about them. They are now and for ever out of the reach of the world, flesh, and devil. They are gone 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.' They are sweetly reposed in Abraham's bosom. They dwell in His presence, who hath redeemed them, where there 'is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.' They are waiting the joyful morning of the resurrection, when their vile bodies shall be made like unto His glorious body, shall be re-united to their souls, shall receive the joyful sentence, and 'inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.'

"It is well also with those of you who are in *Christ, though not gone to God.* You live next door to them. Heaven is begun with you too. The kingdom of God is within you. You feel it.

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This is a kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is begun in grace, and shall terminate in glory. Yea, it is Christ within you the hope of glory. Christ the rock, the foundation, laid in your hearts, hope in the middle, and glory at the top. Christ, hope, glory; Christ, hope, glory. You are washed in the blood of the Lamb; justified, sanctified, and shall shortly be glorified. Yea, your lives are already 'hid with Christ in God.' You have your conversation already in heaven. Already you 'sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' What heavenly sentences are these! What can come nearer Paradise? Bless the Lord, O ye happy souls, and let all that is within you bless His holy name. Sing unto the Lord so long as you live, and praise your God while you have your being. And how long will that be? Through the endless ages of a glorious eternity.

"O my dear brothers and sisters! this is my hope, and this is my purpose. But to whom, and to what, are we indebted for all this, and infinitely more than all the tongues and hearts of men or angels can tell or conceive? To our Redeemer only, and to His merits. Christ within us is Jesus to us. We were poor, lost, helpless sinners, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and children of wrath. But Jesus lived, and Jesus died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to the enjoyment of it.

"And what does all this require at our hands?

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Why, infinitely more than we can render Him to all eternity. However, let us praise and glorify God in the best manner, and with the best member that we have. Let us do it constantly, cordially, cheerfully, so long as we live; and then no doubt we shall do it in heaven for ever.

"Keep close, I beseech you, to every means of grace. Strive to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of God blameless, giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure: add to your faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; to knowledge temperance; to temperance patience; to patience godliness; to godliness brotherly kindness; to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things, says St. Peter, be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus you will give the best token of your thankfulness to Him for what He hath done for your souls; and you shall, not long hence, in heaven, sing His praise with your happy brethren, gone thither before you.

"It is well with all those of you who do truly *desire to be in Christ*, that you may go to God. Surely He owns you. Your desires are from Him: you shall enjoy His favour. By and by you shall have peace with Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. Go forth by the footsteps of the flock; and feed ye by the shepherd's tents. Be constant in every means of grace. He will be found of them that diligently seek Him. Blessed

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are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Though your sins be never so many, never so monstrous, all shall be forgiven. He will have mercy upon you, and will abundantly pardon. For where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more abound. He who hath begun this good work in you, will accomplish it to your eternal good and His eternal glory. Therefore doubt not, fear not: a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise. The deeper is your sorrow, the nearer is your joy. Your extremity is God's opportunity. 'Tis usually darkest before day-break. You shall shortly find pardon, peace, and plenteous redemption, and at last rejoice in the common and glorious salvation of His saints.

"And, lastly, it is well for you who *neither truly desire to be in Christ*, nor to go to God. For it is well for you that you are not in hell. For it is well your day of grace is not utterly past. Behold, now is your accepted time: behold, now is the day of your salvation! O that you may employ the remainder of it in working out your salvation with fear and trembling! Now is faith to be had, saving faith. Now you may be washed from all sins in the Redeemer's blood, justified, sanctified, and prepared for heaven. Take, I beseech you, the time while the time is. You have now the means of grace to use; the ordinances of God to enjoy; His word to read and hear; His ministers to instruct you, and His members to converse with.

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You know not what a day may bring forth. You may die suddenly. As death leaves you, judgment will find you. And if you should die, as you are, *out of Christ*, void of true faith, unregenerate, unsanctified, snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, God will rain upon you, (Psalm xi. 6,) as your eternal, intolerable portion to drink.

"Suffer me, therefore, thus far, one and all of you. God's glory and your everlasting welfare is all I aim at. What I look for in return from you is, I confess, much more than I deserve, your prayers."—*Letter addressed "To the Society in London," dated Haworth, January* 9, 1760.

"GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you, from God even our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Your past lives are a year longer, and your future lives a year shorter, than when I wrote last to you. Are you proportionably advanced in grace, and reduced in nature?

"You are, many of you, already born of God, 'washed,' 'justified,' and 'sanctified;' and you hope to be 'glorified' through the Spirit and mercy of Jesus Christ. Thus much you experience: therefore you are 'a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation:' —what for? 'That you might show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light,' 'and out of the kingdom of Satan unto God,' 'to receive forgive-

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ness of sins, and an inheritance among the sanctified.' Thus writes Paul; thus writes Peter. Therefore show you the necessary and blessed effects which result from such a state. Let all your thoughts, words, and actions *be in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ.* All so done is well done; and, though undeserving of any reward, yet is so acceptable to our dear Saviour, that it has the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come.

"If the term sinless perfection be disgustful to some, sure Christian perfection will be grateful to all who know Christ. 'Tis to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This is scriptural perfection. This is the work of God; this is His command. Yea, and it is natural to the regenerate to desire this. Are you the sons of God? Should you not then be followers (imitators) of God, as dear children? Is Christ, your head, *holy?* Should not you, His members, be *holy* also? Are you endued with the gift of the Spirit? Should you not then bring forth the fruit of the Spirit? Consider all this. Why should we neglect, refuse, or object to be what is most interesting and advantageous in our state? —and so necessary, that though we cannot be saved for it, yet we cannot be saved without it. *Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.*

"Though you are in a state of salvation, yet must you strive to work out your salvation with

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fear and trembling. Give, my brethren, give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus let us see what our Lord and we shall bring it to at last. *Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.*

"'Tis well known we must go through manifold temptations into the kingdom. Our foes will dispute it with us, every inch of the ground to heaven. But what then? Greater is He who is for us than he who is in the world. You *may*, nay, you *must*, stand in the evil day; and when you have done all, stand: if you don't, the *fault* is your own, the *effect* your shame. We are not tempted above that we are able. We never *fall*, we never *sin*, through the *want*, but through the *abuse*, of grace. Nor is it enough to stand our ground; but we must conquer also, or not enjoy the crown of life. Therefore, when the *flesh* tempts you, *flee* and pray; when the *world* tempts you, *watch* and pray; and when the *devil* tempts you, *resist* and pray. So shall ye be 'more than conquerors.' *Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.*

"In a word, diligently use every *means*, and as diligently exercise every *measure*, *of grace*. Be

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fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. In everything invariably aim at His glory, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. *Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.*

"To the everlasting praise of our dear Jesus be it known to you, that His work of grace prospers in these parts. Our congregations are generally large: new members are added to our Societies, and our old ones go on in full assurance; and some of them in the triumph of faith to heaven. Are we trees of righteousness? May we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—*Letter addressed "To the Societies in Newcastle, &c.," dated Haworth, January* 27, 1761.

"PERMIT me to present unto you another New-year's gift, as a farther token of my love for you. Pray accept it, and may the Lord apply it to your hearts.

"How amazingly gracious has our dear Redeemer been, to reconcile His offended Father to you, through His own most precious blood, each drop of which is worth infinitely more than a thousand worlds! How gracious to implant His Divine nature in you, to make you members of His body, flesh, and bones; children of God, and heirs, joint-heirs with Him of eternal glory! Happy are you who are in such a case: yea, blessed are ye who have the Lord for your God.

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"And now what doth the Lord require of you, between this day and death; this new January, and the new Jerusalem? Only love, and the fruits of love. Love six things, and happy will you be for ever. 1. Love the Lord. 2. Love His word. 3. Love His people. 4. Love His ways. 5. Love His works. 6. Love His cross. And be sure your love be sole, whole, pure, and perfect love; as constant and immutable as His love to you: for truly, what is genuine Christian love, but love to God resulting from His love first to you, and shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to you?

"And this is real Christian love: so it is your best estate here below, as it will be your best estate above. It is the kingdom of God within you. It is heaven in you everywhere, and thus you are in heaven everywhere. It is heaven on earth, and heaven in heaven. O that you may be always filled with this love, this heaven, this Christ, this God! In order to this blessed end, pray keep close to every means of grace, and every ordinance of God. Read, meditate, examine, watch, pray, and communicate cheerfully; do, and patiently endure, the will of God; and the God of love undoubtedly shall be your portion, possession, and fruition for ever."—*Letter addressed "To the Societies in Newcastle, &c.," dated Haworth, January* 12, 1762.

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When we read these letters, and infer from them that the spoken addresses of those days would be of a similar character, we cease to wonder that the men who then went forth in the name of God, to stem the torrent of the world's iniquity, were heard with the deep attention we read of in the narratives of the times. In some instances their language may be thought to border upon coarseness; but they looked rather to the power of the sentences they uttered than to their polish, and consulted truth rather than taste. In the joy they felt at being permitted to set before the fallen race of man a present and a free salvation, the privileges of the Gospel appeared so inexpressibly glorious, that in announcing them they sometimes used expressions that, if taken by themselves, or regarded literally, were liable to be perverted; and in some instances might be thought to lead to conclusions which these good men would have repudiated with the utmost indignation. But in all that relates to thoroughness and earnestness; to vigour of style, force of appeal to the conscience, renunciation of self, and entirety of consecration to the one great work of saving souls, they have left an ensample worthy of imitation by all the ministers of the Lord; and it will be found that the nearer they attain to the standard thus presented for their model, the more abundantly will their labours be owned of God, and the more extensive will be the influence they

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exercise upon the nations. When all in the world are earnest around them, their earnestness ought still to be the most salient and impressive, as their walk lies with the soul and its immortality; and their watch-words are, a harrowing hell, and a glorious heaven, and the honour of God.

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CHAPTER XIII.

GRIMSHAW'S CHARACTER, AS A MAN AND AS A MINISTER.

THE sculptor is sometimes called upon to form a statue of one whom he has never seen, from the painted portrait, and the reminiscences of friends; and there are instances in which he has hit the figure and features with wonderful exactness, though under circumstances so unfavourable. But in such cases there is usually an absence of the life-like and truthful resemblance that is seen when the statue is shaped from the living model, and the friend who looks at it says instinctively, "Speak to me!" The biographer is placed in a similar position when called upon to write the life of one who has lived in an age previous to his own; and he cannot speak of the subject he delineates with the same precision that would have been possible if he had heard the voice, seen the smile, marked the lines of thought drawn on the brow, watched the manner of the bearing, grasped the hand, and moved side by side in mutual footfall with the man whom he wishes to represent to the world. He may dream of him, and sketch a form in his

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imagination; and, in a passionate moment, he may wish for some witch of Endor to call him up from beneath, that he may look at him and listen to him. But that creation of his thought is not the very man, whose return home would have been recognised in the distance by the welcome of the watchdog, and whose knock at the door of his house would have assured his family that it was he, and none other. Under this disadvantage we feel ourselves to lie, when proceeding to sketch the character of the incumbent of Haworth, with the hope that many eyes may look upon it, and many minds receive therefrom lessons of instruction. In the principal lineaments we cannot be mistaken; but we must of necessity fail in relation to those distinctive touches and traits that every man has belonging to himself, and that no other person in the world ever had like him.

The portrait published of Grimshaw was taken from a painting by a village-artist, which is still in the possession of the painter's daughter, Mrs. Smith. We cannot tell its original merit, as an unskilful hand has attempted to renew its colour, and has thereby taken away its character. It was probably at first correct as to the general outlines of the countenance, but wanting the finer strokes which bring out the man, and which can only be presented by those who gain the higher walks of art. There is a heaviness and

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doltishness about the features as we have them now, which rather speak of one who loves glebe and greed, than of one whose merry smile made known how he loved a pleasantry, and whose elevated look told of the soul of fire, now radiant in his own parochial temple, and then flashing in the midst of the wild moor or in some distant part of the land, and constantly burning to promote the glory of God and the salvation of all whom he could bring within his influence.

There must have been a wonderful power of adaptation about the men of those days, as well as a hardihood and a determination, by which they could conform themselves to circumstances the most opposite, without appearing to feel the transition. We of the present generation murmur about what we call "red tape," in all the corporate bodies that rule us, whether as citizens or subjects; but the fact is, that we are nearly all under a similar influence, and dare scarcely venture on anything that is out of the common routine. Our personal habits, our style of speech, our modes of thought, the pleasures we pursue, and the particular subjects we study, are all made to move with as much precision and formality as the waggon in the ruts of old years. We are speaking of the masses, and not of individual men. But it was not so with Grimshaw and his devoted associates in the spread of the Gospel. One day he was the guest of the

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Countess of Huntingdon, and the next sleeping in his own hay-loft, because of the number of strangers at the parsonage, and even cleaning the shoes of his guests; both of which acts of almost unexampled lowliness and kind-heartedness he has been known to do. Like Wesley, when one side was sore from the hard pallet on which he lay down, he could thank God that the other side was yet sound. When visiting the very poor, he took with him his own simple refreshment; and when with the lone shepherd or the lowly widow, like the good folk who ministered to him, he could rejoice over "a crust, and Christ with it." Drenched by the rain, chilled by the wind and frost, with no regular meals, walking far and riding further, and speaking in the open air to companies of varied character, many times in the day, he pursued his onward course with a blithesome spirit, and singing songs of praise to his Divine Master. His constitution must have been good, as he was able to continue his itinerancies almost without interruption; and the disease of which he died overtook him in his vigour, and was as fatal in the village to the hale and young as to the delicate and aged. "During the space of sixteen years," says Venn, "he was only once suspended from his labours by sickness, though he dared all weathers, upon the bleak mountains, and used his body with less compassion than a merciful man would his beast." The practice of his earlier days, when he followed the hounds

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with shout and rude halloo, might have prepared him to endure the hardships of the wearied horseman; but nothing less than the grace of God could have enabled him to persevere in his course of duty for so long a period, and amidst scenes so repugnant to the mind of the natural man.

It was his custom to rise early in the morning, —at five in the winter, and at four in the summer,—that he might begin the day with God. He first gave utterance to the joyous feelings of a grateful heart, by singing the doxology,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

After an hour in private, he had family-prayer, at which he read the Psalms and Lessons appointed for the day. His visiters were expected to be present, and any neighbour who wished might share the privilege. There was a short exhortation, after which the attendants were dismissed to their several occupations, at the shop, the loom, or the field. It was usually with some kind benediction,—"May God bless you in your souls, and in your bodies, and in all you put your hands to this day!" or, "Whether you live or die, may the Lord grant that you may live to Him, and for Him, and with Him for ever!" The same good custom was observed at night before he retired to rest, which was usually at ten in the summer, and at eleven in the winter.

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Well would it be if all who are active in the church were as constant as he in the closet, at the family-altar, and in the reading of the book of God.

In one of his letters to the Societies at Newcastle we have an insight into his mode of life. "Suffer me to prescribe to you," he says, "a method how to live one day well. It may serve for every day after, by repeating it. Nor will I presume to lay a burden on your shoulders and not touch it with my own fingers.

"As soon as you awake in the morning, employ half an hour in *five* things. Bless God for the mercies of the night past; pray for the blessings of a new day; examine well your own heart; meditate upon some spiritual subject; and, lastly, plan the business of the approaching day. Then rise at four o'clock, but never later than five, if well. While you put on your clothes, praise or pray mentally, but suitably to your state. Then spend another half-hour in secret meditation, praise, and prayer. After this, call your family together, read a chapter, and, as you have ability and leisure, expound it to them; then sing a hymn, and conclude with prayer. Pray always before and after meat: thus take the curse from off your victuals, and bless God for the benefit of them. Begin, proceed in, and lay by work, *thus:* Begin with that which should never cease, prayer in your mind. While you

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are at your work, meditate, praise, or pray; or converse religiously with those about you. This will not hinder, but further your labour. As often as you can, retire a few minutes to prayer, at nine o'clock in the morning, and three in the afternoon. It would be well to spend a little time with your family immediately after dinner. In the evening, constantly observe the same order of devotion as in the morning. At going to bed, revise the thoughts, words, and actions of the past day. What appears amiss, beg pardon for. What is well, bless God alone for; and never close your eyes to sleep with any unforgiven sin upon your conscience.

"Never neglect this, or some such method of walking with God. Do all feelingly, fervently, and devoutly, as from the Spirit of God in you. Custom will make it easy, familiar, and pleasant to you. And, if you thus spend the week-day, you will no doubt keep the Sabbath-day holy. You will surely attend the word, the Lord's table, and all occasional meetings. All this will help you to attain to the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit."

There was a plainness about his dress, sometimes almost amounting to shabbiness; and he had often literally only one coat and one pair of shoes. But this was not from affectation or

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eccentricity; it was rather from benevolence to the poor. The fare upon his table was in unison with the clothes upon his back, and for the same reason. When bills had to be paid, his stipend had sometimes been all expended, and he had still further to stint himself, in order to be honest. "If I should die to-day," he frequently said, "I have not a penny to leave behind me." But he was careful not to exceed his income knowingly; and when he died, he was not in debt. He was solicitous, also, that his household affairs should be conducted with the utmost economy, and without wastefulness, not being willing that even a morsel of bread should be left unused. "How can those persons," he asks, "answer before God for the food which they deny to poor Christians, and throw away upon dogs?" After his appointment to Haworth, he never sought for further patronage, and was contented with a sphere of labour that few would envy. Even as to that which he could rightly claim as his own he was not exacting, not being willing that his good should be evil spoken of by the unrighteous in his parish. He was satisfied with what the people brought for his church-dues, and did not follow the defaulter with distress-warrant or sale of goods. "I will not deserve your curses," he said, "when I am dead, for what I have received for my poor labours among you: I want no more of you than your souls for my God, and a bare maintenance for myself." Being

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told of a tradesman that he was "hard and honest," he said that he supposed the meaning to be, that he was "hardly honest;" as he could scarcely think that a man who was eager to grasp all he could would not seek to grasp more than he ought.

Though regardless of his own comfort and convenience, he was most anxious for the welfare of his parishioners; and to the destitute and helpless he was a generous friend. Of his more affluent neighbours he begged old shoes, and had them repaired for the poor. When his aged and infirm clerk was unable to go round the village to collect his own salary, he undertook the task, and personally solicited it for him. It became requisite that the church should be enlarged; but he took upon himself the burden of the alterations that were required, without a church-rate or any enforced tax, and completed the work by the aid of voluntary contributions alone.

"*In labours more abundant,*" might have been adopted as his motto. When away upon the mountain, as we have seen, a crust of bread and an onion, with a cup of water from the clear stream, sufficed for his only fare. This he sometimes carried in his hand, and ate it on horseback, that he might lose as little time as possible. He was punctual in his attention to time and place, and never disappointed the congregation,

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however few the people, or distant the place, or inclement the weather. At the conclusion of the service, he generally requested permission to come again, and was not often refused by those who had listened to his soul-stirring appeals. In the dead of the night, when the snow-fall might have been regarded as an apology for refusal, if called from his bed to visit some sick person, he promptly obeyed the summons. And his return was sometimes a work of peril, when the snow had drifted across the pathway, or by its fast falling obliterated the footprints of his former journey. To those who had refused to listen to him when in health, and yet sent for him when attacked by disease, he would say, "Now the hand of God is upon you, and you think the devil is ready to take you, and hell open to receive you, now it is, 'Send for Grimshaw.'" He once made an apology to a friend for not visiting his wife who was sick, by saying, "I am sorry that I have not been able to visit your wife: I have not wanted inclination, but time; for I have had thirty times to preach this week." In this instance the patient belonged to another parish; in his own, the sick were visited as regularly as the services were held in the church.

With his own heart as open as the sky, and his motive as pure as the light, he looked upon all flattery and hypocrisy with an intense hatred. It was in this spirit that he once stopped his

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friend Whitefield in the midst of his sermon. The great preacher had spoken of those professors who are a disgrace to the cause of God by their inconsistent conduct, and was proceeding to say, that there was no necessity for him to enlarge on such a topic there, as they had so long enjoyed the ministry of a faithful pastor, and must therefore be free from this charge; when he was interrupted by Grimshaw, who cried out, "O, sir, for God's sake do not speak so; I pray you, do not flatter them; I fear the greater part of them are going to hell with their eyes open!"

To a lady with whom he was one day conversing he administered a striking but severe reproof, which may be of use to some who live in our own times.* She had expressed her admiration of a certain minister, who was more gifted in talent than in grace. "Madam," said Grimshaw, "I am glad you never saw the devil." When asked why he made this remark, he said, "Because he has greater talents than all the ministers in the world. I am fearful, if you were to see him, you would fall in love with him; as you seem to have so high a regard for talent without sanctity. Pray, do not be led away with the sound of talents. Let the ministry under which Providence has called you never be deserted under the influence of novelty. There dwell; and pray fervently that it may prove

* Communicated by the Rev. J. P. Lockwood.

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to you increasingly edifying, consolatory, and instructive."

No method was left untried to learn the real character of his people. He sometimes put on disguise, that he might be able to converse more familiarly with them, and find out their failings or faults. By this means he exposed the selfishness of a parishioner who was wishful to be thought beneficent, by asking a night's lodging; when he was not only refused, but treated with abuse. Intending to teach a blind old woman that her heart was not yet changed, he went to her unexpectedly, and without speaking poked her repeatedly, but gently, with his stick; when, supposing it was one of the children from the village, she threatened her pastor, and began to swear. At a cottage prayer-meeting the attendants had to endure much persecution, and for a long time the delinquents carried on their annoyances with impunity, as no one could discover who they were. At last the incumbent came to their assistance. Putting on an old woman's cap, he peeped stealthily from behind the door, and then appeared to grow bolder, until he was able to make the observations he wished. They were boys who had come to have sport; and fine fun they made of the old woman, as with mock and menace they defied her; but Grimshaw discovered who they were, and then had them brought to justice, when the persecution ceased.

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When he met with any one in the lanes, he would enter into familiar conversation with them, and generally inquired if they were accustomed to pray. When they answered in the affirmative, and he doubted their sincerity, he bade them kneel down and show him in what manner they performed this duty. This was an ordeal they were sometimes unable to pass through with credit; and there were occasionally scenes on the road-side that a stranger could not look at without a smile; but to the persons concerned they were, in some instances, the means of awakening an alarm lest the soul should be shut out from the presence of God. "*He would rive them from horseback, to make them pray*," is the tradition of the country. But he was as ready to perform an act of courtesy as to administer reproof. On his way to Colne he overtook an old woman, and asked her where she was going. She replied, "To hear Grimshaw." He pitied her many infirmities; but she said her soul was already there, and she would make the body follow. Struck by her earnestness, he took her up behind him on the pillion, and enabled her to reach the place without further toil. The use of the pillion was then universal; but this cozy mode of conveyance is now seldom seen. It was the custom in the days of Grimshaw for the bride to ride on single horse to church, and return on the pillion behind her new lord; but from awkwardness, or something worse, so many scenes of bad omen at

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the commencement of a life-long journey were presented, that the bride of the hills now returns home in the same way as the ladies of other lands.

In the reproof of sin, he was firm and fearless. Meeting with a wicked man in a shop he had entered, he charged him with the crime he was committing, and told those who were present that he could touch with his stick a man who even in the past night had committed an iniquity that would be the ruin of body and soul together. When any open evil had been done in the parish, on the next Sabbath the trumpet of alarm was sounded, and the vice exposed.

Nor was he unmindful of himself, whilst watchful over the souls of others. He had a fine cow, in which he took so much pride, that the thought of her followed him into the services of the sanctuary, and so far hindered his communion with God. But he determined that she should no longer ruffle his mind, and so announced her as for sale. When a farmer came to look at her, he asked, as usual, if she had any fault. To this he replied, "Her fault will be no fault to you: she follows me into the pulpit." If every minister were thus to make a sacrifice of all that robs him of his spiritual strength, there would be a mighty hecatomb in some parts of the land. Yet all serve a jealous God, who will admit of no rival in the affections, and justly demands to be "all in earth and all in heaven."

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The king had in him a loyal subject. At the time of the Rebellion, he encouraged the young men of his parish to enlist, that they might fight for their God, their king, and their country. The battle was not against the Pretender and his race alone, but against Popery, and the power of a reckless oppressor.

Grimshaw was constant in reproving offenders, reconciling persons at enmity, preventing law-suits, and promoting the temporal benefit of his parishioners. He has been known to fall down on his knees when the disputants whom he had been trying to reconcile were still obdurate, and beseech them, in the most affecting terms, not to allow the bitterness against each other to remain in their hearts. It would also appear from a paper in his own hand-writing,* written on the sale of a cow during a murrain that raged in the county, that he acted as a magistrate.

The advantage to Methodism of being patronized by so respectable a man was soon apparent.

* This paper was copied from the original MS. by the Rev. Thornley Smith, and by him kindly transmitted to the author. It is as follows:—"*West Riding of Yorkshire.* This is to certify, that one Milch Cow, belonging to Robert Pighills, of Buckley, in Stanbury, in the said Riding, appears upon the oath of Robert Pighills to be entirely free from any distemper or infection whatsoever, as also the Herd to which she belongeth, and have been for 8 weeks past. Given under my hand and seal this 27th day of April, 1747.

"WILLIAM GRIMSHAW, [L. S.]
"Minister of Haworth."

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The evangelist Darney was a Scotchman, and on that account an object of suspicion, as it was in the year of Grimshaw's first interview with him that Charles Edward made his descent upon the country to claim the crown of Britain. The Methodists were accused, in some places, of Popery, and of favouring the Pretender; and it was said that in their private meetings they endeavoured to form plots against the established government. When their cause was espoused by the incumbent of Haworth, these suspicions were set aside; and it was said that, if they were rebels, a Church of England parson would not have joined their ranks. Yet Wesley, though himself a clergyman, was reported to have gone over to the side of the king's enemies, and to have been imprisoned for sedition. As on the Continent at the present day, charges of disaffection were often brought against the Methodists, when the real intention was to prevent the spread of their opinions, and prevent them from holding the more private means of grace that contribute so much to their vitality and strength. It is probable that the spirit induced by the Rebellion had more to do with the early opposition against Methodism than has yet been brought out.

Among the earlier Methodist preachers there were many men who were gems of the brightest lustre, but rude and unpolished. Compared with the advantages they had possessed in their youth, those of Grimshaw were great and commanding.

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The son of a yeoman, brought up in an isolated hamlet, the companion of boys belonging to all grades in the village; now in familiar intercourse with the men collected around the smithy fire, discussing the affairs of the nation with a noise sometimes louder than the clink of the blacksmith's hammer; and now listening by the ingle-nook, to repeated tales, of which the malicious deeds of some innocent old woman were the staple of terror, or to some legend from the lips of the ancient patriarch, or garrulous dame, whose place of right was in the old arm-chair, or at the warmest corner of the long-settle; he would thereby receive an insight into rustic manners, and acquire rude forms of speech, and learn the thoughts, feelings, and aims of the poor, with an impressiveness that afterwards greatly aided him in addressing the multitude. At the grammar-school and college he received a classical education; and from the character of the books in which he most delighted, and sundry scraps of poetry still in existence, it is evident that he possessed a well-cultivated mind and a refined taste. But when the spark from heaven lit up his soul with the radiance Divine, like the son of the priest, who in the wilderness refused the vestment of his order and the flesh of the sacrifice, and was clad in a coarse garment of camel's hair, and made his repast of locusts and wild honey, that he might address his countrymen with the greater power; so the converted

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incumbent passed by the learned phrases of the school, and presented the knowledge he had acquired in the way-side speech of those whom he addressed, when he went forth upon the mountains to enlarge the boundary of Christ's kingdom and preach the Gospel to the poor. For this course he had high authority. There must have been great simplicity about the addresses of Christ, when "the common people heard Him gladly."

One source of Grimshaw's power in addressing the people was his ability to seize on any passing event, and turn it to instructive account. Thus, when preaching on a cold day, he observed that some of his hearers were shivering from its intensity; which gave him the opportunity of admonishing them that, however cold the weather, he feared there was a still deadlier coldness in their own hearts. The objects with which they were most familiar, or the forms of speech they most commonly used, were the means by which he taught them the things of God. He preached in the same style as that in which Albert Durer painted. There was a homeliness about all he said that attracted instant attention, and made his words of counsel their own interpreter. He had not the clearness of Wesley, nor the force of Whitefield, nor the wit of Berridge; but he was playful, animated, and impressive. We are reminded of Luther by his roughness, and of Latimer by his picturesque groupings, and by his

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allusions to the manners of the times among the simple folk who composed his audience.

There are at Scaitcliffe Hall, the residence of John Crossley, Esq., some thirty sermons carefully written out; but it is probable that he trusted more to the impression of the moment than to careful preparation. The fire was always burning, and the heart always yearning after lost souls; and, as the man who sees his neighbour's house in flames needs not the aid of oratory to rouse its inmates to a sense of their peril, so Grimshaw needed no set phrases to enable him to tell the villagers that "the wages of sin is death;" and as the man who knows by oft-repeated travel the road over the wide moor needs no map to mark out its turnings and windings, so was he able, from the sense of his own acceptance with God, to declare with power, that whosoever will may be saved.

An old man, who kept a toll-bar, being asked by a traveller how a clergyman who lived in the neighbourhood was getting on, "He must get on," was the reply; "for he lays at sin as if he were knocking down an ox." There was the same vehemence of battery in the sermons of the pastor at Haworth. But as neither the sound of the rams' horns, nor the blast of the silver trumpets, nor the loud shouts of the people would have availed to hurl down the walls of Jericho, had not the hand of the Lord God of Israel shaken the foundations and rent asunder

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the towers; so Grimshaw knew full well that, however clear his statements of doctrine, or energetic his appeals, they would not avail for the salvation of the sinner, without "the soul-converting power." He was therefore eminently a man of prayer. A woman having remarked that he had something new to say to them whenever he preached, another female accounted for it by replying, that he lived near to God. In spirit, he was most devout. He would frequently say, "My God, my Jesus, my Master, I love Thee indeed: but how shall I love Thee enough?" At the mention of the name of Jesus, he would pause, and break out into some exclamation expressive of his love. "He was like a man with his feet on earth and his soul in heaven." "His soul, at various times," says Venn, "enjoyed very large manifestations of God's love that he might not faint, and he drank deep into His spirit. His cup ran over, and at some seasons his faith was so strong, and hope so abundant, that higher degrees of spiritual delight would have overpowered his mortal frame."

Whoever came to converse with him felt at home at once, whether it was the old widow in her bereavement or the diffident ploughboy from the hill-side. There was nothing put on; no sham, no pretence. He did not play the minister; and a stranger might be in his company for a considerable time without discovering

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that he was anything more than a pious man and pleasant companion. By this heartiness and power of sociability, made still more lovely in their exercise through the grace that dwelt within him, he was enabled to bind firmly around him the affections of his people; and by this means he frequently secured attention, and was listened to with respect, when the admonitions of a sterner man would have been rejected with scorn.

Surrounded by a population at first "as ignorant as the country is wild," and having a soul sufficiently vast to take in all the land, we do not wonder that he was guided, as to his sphere of labour, by the word of God rather than by the canons of the Church, and that he was willing to "preach the Gospel to every creature," so far as lay within his power. This irregularity sometimes exposed him to the censure of his more careless brethren, and to official inquiry from his ecclesiastical superiors. A charge was preferred against him, before the Archbishop of York, for having preached in a licensed meeting-house; meaning the Methodist chapel at Leeds, a sanctuary greatly honoured of God as the birth-place of thousands of souls. Had proof been forthcoming to substantiate the charge, he would have been suspended, as his predecessor had been, for irregularity. Though no act of delinquency was proved, he promised His Grace that he would not preach in any place that had been

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licensed for the worship of Dissenters; yet asserting his determination to continue to preach abroad, so long as there were souls for whom no one seemed to care. On another occasion, when accused of preaching out of his own parish, he was asked by the archbishop, "How many communicants had you when you first came to Haworth?" He answered, "Twelve, my Lord." "How many have you now at such solemnities?" was the next question; and the reply was, "In the winter from three to four hundred; and sometimes, in the summer, near twelve hundred." On hearing this, His Grace expressed his approbation, and said, "We cannot find fault with Mr. Grimshaw, as he is instrumental in bringing so many persons to the Lord's table."

These were not the only occasions on which he was cited before the metropolitan. At another time, when complaint was made to the archbishop of his ramblings, and of his intrusion into other folds, His Grace "announced his intention to hold a confirmation-service in Mr. Grimshaw's church, and expressed a wish to have an interview with him on that occasion. They accordingly met in the vestry of Haworth church, on the day appointed; and while the clergy and laity were assembling in great numbers to be present at the confirmation, the following conversation took place:*—'I have heard,' said the prelate, 'many extraordinary reports respecting your conduct,

* Strachan's "Life and Times of the Rev. George Lowe."

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Mr. Grimshaw. It has been stated to me, that you not only preach in private houses in your parish, but also travel up and down, and preach where you have a mind, without consulting your diocesan, or the clergy into whose parishes you obtrude your labours; and that your discourses are very loose; that, in fact, you can and do preach about anything. That I may be able to judge for myself, of both your doctrine and manner of stating it, I give you notice, that I shall expect you to preach before me and the clergy present, in two hours hence, and from the text which I am about to name.' After repeating the text, the bishop added, 'Sir, you may now retire, and make what preparation you can, while I confirm the young people.' 'My Lord,' said Mr. Grimshaw, looking out of the vestry-door into the church, 'see what multitudes of people are here! Why should the order of the service be reversed, and the congregation kept out of the sermon for two hours? Send a clergyman to read prayers, and I will begin immediately.' After prayers, Mr. Grimshaw ascended the pulpit, and commenced an extempore prayer for the archbishop, the people, and the young persons about to be confirmed; and wrestled with God for His assistance and blessing, until the congregation, the clergy, and the prelate were moved to tears. After the service, the clergy gathered around His Grace to ascertain what proceedings he intended to adopt in order

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to restrain the preacher from such rash and extemporaneous expositions of the Divine word. The archbishop looked round upon them with paternal benignity; and, taking Mr. Grimshaw by the hand, said, with a tremulous voice and with a faltering tongue, 'I would to God that all the clergy in my diocese were like this good man!' Mr. Grimshaw afterwards observed to a party of friends, whom he had invited to take tea with him that evening,—'I did expect to be turned out of my parish on this occasion; but if I had, I would have joined my friend Wesley, taken my saddle-bags, and gone to one of his poorest circuits.'" The archbishop was probably John Gilbert; as Robert Drummond, who succeeded him in 1761, once said to Dr. Conyers Middleton, "Were you to inculcate the morality of Socrates, it would do more good than canting about the new birth."

Grimshaw greatly admired the Homilies, and regarded their disuse, and that of the Thirty-nine Articles, as "the chief occasion of all the mischiefs in the Church;" believing it probable that if they had been constantly read, Methodism would never have appeared,—"those books, and what the Methodists preach, being the same." An old clergyman of his acquaintance being asked by his curate if he might read the Homilies in the church, answered, "No: for if you should do so, all the congregation would turn Methodists.".

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The catholicity of his spirit may be learnt from an expression he frequently used: "I love Christians, true Christians, of all parties: I do love them; I will love them; and none shall make me do otherwise."

In the preceding pages, the Methodism of Grimshaw may appear to have been made too prominent. This has arisen from no wish to prove that he lived and died in the Connexion instituted by John Wesley; but from the single consideration, that it was impossible otherwise to limn his character aright, or with any completeness. We have many examples of an opposite course, in which our associates in Biography have endeavoured to free their friends from the imputation of Methodism, or to show that, if tainted by it, they took it naturally, and not from the virus of the Wesleys. Yet, whilst Grimshaw entered into all the disciplinary arrangements of Wesley, and availed himself of the openings presented by his congregations and chapels for the preaching of the word, we must concede that as to dogmatic theology he was less within the pale of Wesleyan Methodism. When preaching thirty sermons in one week, or even fourteen, as in his more idle round, he had little time to acquire exact truth, or to study the shades of difference in systems held by men who were equally leal to what they deemed the great teachings of God. The master-passion of his

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mind was not the enforcement of a creed, but the destruction of the tyranny of Satan, and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, in its cheering influence and saving power. It was said by the immediate descendants of his hearers, that his ministry was tinged with Calvinism after he had been visited by Whitefield; and that, after one of the Wesleys had been with him, and had preached in his church, he zealously asserted God's universal love to man.*

The circuit in which Grimshaw resided was called "Grimshaw's circuit," and he was regarded as the "assistant," or superintendent, under Wesley. The preachers appointed by the Methodist Conference were known as "Grimshaw's preachers." He visited the classes quarterly, and gave tickets of membership, by which the receiver was officially acknowledged as belonging to the Methodist Society. He attended the Quarterly Meetings, and held lovefeasts; and regularly preached in the Methodist chapels in the neighbourhood. The preachers were entertained at his house on their visits to Haworth; they preached in his kitchen, previously to the erection of the chapel, to the building of which he gave all his influence; and in the year before his death he attended the Methodist Conference at Leeds.

Writing to Wesley, towards the close of his life, he says: "There are several things which have for some time been matter of so much

* Jackson's "Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley."

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uneasiness to me, that I thought, could they not be somehow accommodated, I should be obliged to recede from the Connexion; which to do, would have been one of the most disagreeable things in the world to me. I would fain live and die in this happy relation I have for many years borne, and still bear, to you. Two of the most material points were concerning imputed righteousness and Christian perfection. But, as to the former, what you declared to be your notion of it at Heptonstall is so near mine, that I am well satisfied. And as to the other, your resolutions in Conference are such, if John Emmot informs me right, as seem to afford me sufficient satisfaction." After giving his own thoughts on these subjects, he proceeds: "I have only to add, that I am determined, through the help of God, so far as I know or see at present, to continue in close connexion with you, even unto death; and to be as useful as I am able, or is consistent with my parochial and other indispensable obligations: chiefly in this round, and at times abroad, to strengthen your hands in the great and glorious work of our Lord, which you have evidently so much at heart, elaborately so much in hand, and in which He—blessed for ever be His name!—has so extensively and wonderfully prospered you."

John Wesley has been accused of insincerity in professing still to belong to the Church of England, when he was establishing Societies apart from the care of its clergy, in nearly every

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parish of the land; and it has been said that in so doing he well knew the consequences that would follow, and must, therefore, have been actuated by ambition. But Grimshaw, as far as was possible with the duties of a local curacy, followed in the same steps, and expressed the same sentiments. Yet no one can suspect *him* of any intention to injure the Church, or of a wish to make to himself a name of renown. The same ruling principle that led him to disregard minor differences of doctrine led him also to overlook the less important requirements of ecclesiastical regulation. He lamented the position in which he foresaw the Societies would be placed; but he did not alter his course on that account, or dissolve his connexion with the men who were to be the instruments of its accomplishment. To Charles Wesley, the thought that the Methodists would leave the Church was intolerable; to Grimshaw, it was a grief; and to John Wesley, it was a cause of regret. But, as both Grimshaw and Wesley sought rather the rescue of souls than the upholding of the Establishment, though desiring this as well, they were comparatively careless about the minor consequences that might afterwards ensue from their irregular proceedings, if the glory of the Lord should be revealed. "Though his desire of usefulness," says Newton, "and the pressing invitations he received from different and distant places, induced him to break through the rules of strict parochial order, he was in all

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other respects a stanch friend of the Established Church; and I believe the number of those who remained in communion with Mr. Grimshaw to the end of his life was much greater than those who withdrew from him. With regard to the latter, the most that can be said against him (if it be indeed against him) is, that he found them little better than heathen, and left them evangelical Dissenters."

Appended to Newton's Life there is what is called "Mr. Grimshaw's Creed." It is taken from Middleton's Biographia Evangelica, and was sent in MS. to Romaine. It was not intended for publication; and some of its expressions, which betray a want of correct thought, would probably have received a more careful revision, had he known the extensive circulation they would gain. The conclusion is as follows:— "Here are the sum and substance of my creed. It is, at least, what I presume to call *my* form of sacred words: in it I can truly say, I have no respect to men or books, ancient or modern, but to the holy Scriptures, reason, and experience. According to this creed, I hitherto have, and hope hereafter, so far as I apprehend, to proceed in all my preaching; debasing men, and exalting my dear Lord, in all His offices. If we materially differ, be it so. Let brotherly love continue. I am fixed; being resolved not to have my religion, like some dear men amongst us of

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late, to seek after more than twenty years' experience and profession. All that I know of you is by your conversation and books, which I cordially love and approve.

"I think we are both agreed to pull down man, and, when we have that proud chit down, to keep him down. For this is the main; and never let him recover so much as his knees, till, with a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, the dear Redeemer raises him. He ought to be convinced that a good life will no more conduce than a wicked life to his justification. That all that is not *of* faith, and consequently *before* faith, is sin. Nor will I allow that it is any more by good works after grace than before, that the believer is saved. For, however our Lord may graciously consider them at the last day, eternal life is certainly 'the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Christ alone has purchased for us what grace in heart and life makes us meet for. What have we to boast of? Or what have we that we have not received? Surely by grace we are saved. When I die, then shall I have my greatest grief and my greatest joy: my greatest grief, that I have done so little for Jesus; my greatest joy, that Jesus has done so much for me. My last words shall be, 'Here goes an unprofitable servant.'"

This creed was evidently written before he had seen Romaine, and, perhaps, before his thoughts on some of the subjects introduced in it were fully matured. It partakes of the looseness and

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confusion that pervade some other of his writings, when he leaves the limit of personal experience and practical exhortation. There are two great duties to which all men must attend who would attain to the whole counsel of God: one is, to realize fully the utter impotence and depravity of the natural man; the other is, to discover the uttermost power of Divine grace in the entire renovation of the believer in Christ. But our conviction is, that whilst Grimshaw, and the devoted men by whom in this respect he was guided, succeeded in the first object, they failed as to the second; that, whilst they set forth correctly the moral position of the unrenewed man, they did unwitting dishonour to the glory of God in placing at too low a standard the privilege of the "father" in Christ Jesus; that in defending the outer rampart, they too much neglected the inner keep, and thereby allowed the enemy to gain an advantage. Yet they had words of magnificent aspiration before them continually in their own Liturgy. When the church universal shall be led to utter believingly the Collect of the Communion, without any mental reservation, and looking for a present and general answer to the petition, the full travail of the Redeemer's soul will be experienced, and the richest fruit of millennial glory grace the world:—"Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name."

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The vexed question of Grimshaw's Calvinism we shall leave to his own statements, and those of his personal friends who professed that system. "He hath had much assistance," says Williams, "from two laymen.* . . . . The former of these holds particular election, the latter universal redemption. 'My business,' said Mr. Grimshaw, 'is to hold the balance as evenly as I can betwixt both, and to keep them from disputing. The doctrine of election, I think, belongs only, or chiefly, to the assured; to them it must be a pleasant reflection to think—God hath from the beginning chosen me to salvation, &c. But I cannot imagine of what use it can be to preach this doctrine to the unconverted. My business is, to invite all to come to Christ for salvation, and to assure all that will come of a hearty welcome.'"

One charge that White brought against the Methodist preachers was, that "instead of laying down the plain easy rules of the Christian dispensation, they dwell too often on the grand mysteries of election and reprobation, which belong to God." To this allegation Grimshaw replies: "Indeed, sir, it is neither my design nor desire to meddle with this opinion. I profess *the universal scheme;* and believe—though it may be true, in the opinion of some, that there are a select number, given by the Father to the Son as the reward of His toil and sufferings, which shall

* Williams's Diary.

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be infallibly brought in, and saved, and so far an absolute, unconditional election, as to such, admitted—yet, that Christ died for the salvation of all men, and that all men, therefore, may be saved."

"If the doctrine," says Newton, "which ascribes the whole of a sinner's salvation,* from the first dawn of light, the first motion of spiritual life in the heart, to its full accomplishment in victory over the last enemy, be Calvinism, I think Mr. Grimshaw was a Calvinist. But I am not sure that he thought himself so. And many Calvinists would scarcely have acknowledged his claim to that name, if he had made it, for two reasons:—

"1. His first religious acquaintance were among that branch of the Methodists so called, who were connected with the late Mr. John Wesley. He and the most of his preachers certainly were not Calvinists. But as in general they preached repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, were evidently instrumental in turning many from darkness to light, were despised by the world for the sake of the Gospel, and for their singularity; though Grim-

* This sentence is evidently incomplete, but it is the same in all the editions of Newton's Life to which we have access. We suppose it was intended to read thus: "If the doctrine which ascribes the whole of a sinner's salvation to the grace of God: or, the Holy Spirit, &c." Thus corrected, the doctrine it contains is just as much Arminian as it is Calvinistic.

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shaw's preaching and theirs did not in all points accord, he, who had a mind too noble and benevolent to be fettered by a regard for names and parties, believing that there were great numbers among that people who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, overlooked smaller differences, and thought it his duty to unite with them in supporting the common cause; this attachment to a people whom the Calvinists considered as very erroneous, led many of them to suppose that he was wholly and fully on that side. And, on the other hand, those of the Methodists who were more zealous for the peculiarities of their leader considered him but a half-brother, because he did not go all their lengths.

"2. Though he preached the doctrines of grace, he avoided the discussion of some high points which engage, and perhaps too much engross, the attention of minds of a speculative turn. . . . . His zeal was too ardent, his time too precious, the object of his ministry too important, to afford him leisure to offer to his hearers, cold, critical nicety of expression, or metaphysical subtleties; or to amuse them with distinctions, which, however ingenious, may, for their nicety and usefulness, be well compared to splitting of hairs. He spoke with authority as a messenger from God. The sense he had of the evil of sin, the worth of souls, the nearness of eternity, and the love of the Saviour, filled his heart, and raised him far above a scrupulous

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systematical accuracy; and therefore, though a preacher of free grace, he was not numbered among Calvinists."

When we turn away from the eccentricities in which he sometimes indulged, and, forgetting the indistinctness of some of his doctrinal views, contemplate the pastor and preacher, and the man of God, we walk amidst a glory lit from the skies; and a voice seems to tell us that we are to adore our Redeemer, who has permitted so bright a vision to be witnessed among men. In all his talk and travel, at the house and in the church, with the beggar and with the noble, in the light of the day and the darkness of the night, he is the same man, aiming at the same result, the lessening of man's misery and the promoting of God's glory. The simplicity of his character was its attractiveness and charm. On the mind of Wesley there lay the care of all the churches, a burden sitting more lightly upon him than the same pressure would have done upon any other man, but still a care. The journeyings of Whitefield were like a royal progress as to the interest they caused; in his case, the shouts of welcome being all sincere, with the victor-wreaths cast in profusion at his feet, telling of captive souls whose fetters he had been the means of breaking, and to whom he had brought liberty. The labours of Venn were principally confined to his own parish; and, when the opportunity was pre-

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sented, he forsook his parish for a wider sphere of action and usefulness. But "honest Grimshaw," as his friends loved to call him, was free from the solicitudes of church-government, and never left the humble pathway opened out before him by the hand of God at the commencement of his career as the watchman of the hills; nor did he ever move for any length of time, or to any distance, from the gorse by the dell-side or the heather of the moor. We see him first in a quarry, asking timidly of an earnest but despised evangelist the way of salvation. From that place of concealment he emerges, to enter openly some grey dwelling built from its stone, and there proclaim fearlessly the great truths he had learnt; and from this time until his death there is scarcely a day in which he does not visit for the same purpose some lowly dwelling of the same character, with the play of the moorland breeze around it, and the murmur of the mountain-stream at its door. He visited Kingswood; but it was at the call of a dying daughter. He wrote letters full of holy admonitions to the Societies at London and Newcastle; but we have no record that he ever saw the metropolis or crossed the Tyne; nor can we learn that he ever preached in the capital of his county, the ancient York. When he rode down the street of Leeds or Manchester, it was usually to meet one of his brethren who had come from afar on the errand that lay nearest his heart.

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Strong of frame, and generally in rude health, his study was under the blue sky, and each person he met with, or each service he held, was the turning over of a new leaf in his text-book. He might occasionally be interrupted in his meditations by a line of pack-horses, with their tinkling bells,—the mode by which the produce of the country was then carried; or by the noise of some company flushed with too copious draughts of the strong ale drunk at the arvil-feast made at a neighbour's funeral. But usually he would wend his way over hill and along lane, for hours that to another would have been wearisome, but to him were happy moments, spent as in the audience-chamber of God. Full of the unction received at this source, he mingled with men that he might impart to them a portion of the same blessed influence. The memory of the sad hours of his earlier struggle, and of the terrible strife he then had with Satan for the mastery, prepared him to listen with the greater patience and kinder sympathy to the tale of the heart-stricken penitent, whose look of woe told that he was now in conflict with the same enemy. The victory he had gained enabled him to rise, as well, to the heights of the loftiest experience, when the saint of God, pouring forth the emotions of a full heart, told how a hand Divine had borne him above the waterfloods, and supported him in the hour of his agony; imparting to him grace to walk in the pure light that

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surrounds the cross, and baring before him, whilst his feet still trod the marl of earth, the glories of the jasper plains and of the innumerable throng walking in brightness upon their face serene. The wild men of the moor could not at first understand his ways; and they rose up in stern opposition against one who sought to change their old and most sacred habits, and teach them a new mode in which to pray. But when years had rolled away, and their minister was still as earnest and plain-spoken as when they first listened to his voice,—when they heard of one and another who had forsaken their evil practices, and become sober and honest,—when they learnt how the poor family in the upland had been visited, and the man sick of a malignant fever had been relieved by his bounty and instructed,—when they were told at so many funerals they attended how the persons deceased had died singing songs of rapture themselves, or listening to music from the heavenly choristers around their death-bed,—when they saw the mighty stream that flowed to and from the old church Sabbath after Sabbath, in all weathers, and at all seasons,—when they found that they never met their pastor but he had some good word to say to them, or some kind inquiry to make, and that there was not a nook of the parish, however wild or remote, he had not visited again and again,—their testiness and unapproachableness turned into admiration; the surly scowl

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was changed into a pleasant smile; and they loved their curate as the best of men. Were a monument to be erected to his memory, a more truthful or impressive inscription could not be found for it than this: "No parishioner, after his death, could hear his name mentioned without tears."*

* The facts in this chapter, unless when otherwise acknowledged, are principally taken from Newton and Myles; but several were communicated to the author by persons resident in the neighbourhood of Haworth, among whom he would more particularly mention, Isaac Overend, of Lower Town; Thomas Rhodes, of Lees; and John Pighills, of Laycock. The last-named informant was upwards of eighty; blind; but so happy in the love of God, that though he lay long awake he would say, when called to breakfast, "What, is it morning already! I have had such sweet communion with Jesus that I can scarcely believe the time has passed away so quickly."

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CHAPTER XIV.

SICKNESS, DEATH, AND FUNERAL SERMON.

THE winter's snow had passed away from the hills; the winds of inclement March were beginning to lull themselves to rest; a few wild flowers were seen here and there in more sheltered nooks; the birds were sending forth their notes more joyously, as if conscious that brighter days were at hand; and the delicate female, and the cotter from the more distant dwelling, emerging from the confinement of dreary weeks, ventured once more to the thronged church, thankful that the prospect was now before them of again being able to listen continuously, with no more interruptions from the storm, to the cheering and instructive words of their venerated pastor. But as they sat expectant in their pews, awaiting the commencement of the service, it was not the old and familiar face they saw when the minister entered from the vestry; it was another voice to which they were to listen. Yet, as this was not without previous example, and their pastor might be visiting some other locality, it was only, they concluded, a passing disappointment, and they might hope to hear on the next Sabbath a sermon

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of the kind that did them so much good. But when the prayer for the "afflicted" was read, and it was known that their wise instructer was dangerously ill, there was the bowing down of many souls in bitter grief, like the bending of a garth of reeds before the force of the tempest. Their way home seemed longer and more wearisome than usual; and on his arrival there the stalwart man threw himself at once on the seat before the smouldering turf, unmindful of the food there placed for his Sunday's dinner, in mute helplessness or in secret prayer, and unable to tell the other inmates of the house the sad intelligence. Next morning the most trusty lad was sent early to the parsonage, to inquire if there was any hope; but on each successive day the tidings he brought were more and more mournful.

A malignant fever raged in the village in the early part of the year 1763, which was fatal to many of the inhabitants. On its breaking out, Grimshaw had a presentiment that some one belonging to his family would be called upon to die, and exhorted all to be ready. He had for some time suffered severely, but bore the pain with exemplary patience. "I expect my stay upon earth to be short," he said, "and I must endeavour to make the most of a short life, and so devote myself to God as not to go fearfully creeping towards heaven at last." On the 5th of March he wrote to Charles Wesley, making

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sorrowful mention of reports he had received from London, but expressing his former affection for his old friend and his work. "God bless you and yours, and brother Downes! Who wrote last, I know not; you, or I. Judge as you please. This I know, I love you dearly. The work of God prospers in these parts. We have taken above a hundred of Mr. Ingham's scattered members into Society, who behave well, and are very solicitous for the life and power of godliness. I hope we shall pick up many more of them. I rejoice and give God thanks that He hath so renewed your strength. May He long continue it for His own glory, His people's benefit, your own and your family's comfort!" At this time he must have been in his usual health, or under no apprehension of the immediate approach of death, as he was anticipating future usefulness. Faithful still to his former and long-tried principles, he was labouring with the zeal of earlier years to assist the Society and extend its influence. When he lay soon afterwards upon the bed of death, he had the satisfaction of knowing that the church of his affection was in great prosperity; and that the scene he had found so desolate was now in full luxuriance, many harvests already reaped, and the corn-clad valleys still shouting to the stately trees upon the hills, and all around glad for the name of the Lord. On the 21st of the same month, whilst yet unshaken by any apparent disease, he wrote

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with his own hand, and with no sign of tremulousness, a number of directions for his funeral. The form written in 1739 was still in his possession, but it was superseded by a document more in consistence with his present views of propriety and duty.

The fever proved most infectious; but he did not on that account intermit his labours, or shun the place of peril. When visiting a parishioner, he caught the prevailing epidemic, and at once understood that the presage of which he had spoken was for himself, and foretold his early departure. At first, neither the medical man who attended him, nor any one by whom he was visited, was apprehensive of danger. "Our dear and much-regretted friend," says Colbeck, writing to Charles Wesley, "was divinely persuaded that, as life had not, so neither could the ghastly tyrant, separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. His consolations, from almost the moment the fever seized him, were neither few nor small. He frequently expressed himself as if he was as happy as it is possible to be while clothed with mortality, and as fully satisfied that when the silver cord of life should be loosed, an abundant entrance would be ministered to his joyous soul, into the holiest through the blood of atonement, as if he had already been an inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem."

To the physician who attended him "he

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expressed, in strong terms, the humiliating sense he had upon a retrospect of his whole life; how little he had done for the Redeemer; and how disproportionate, defective, and defiled his best services had been, if compared with the obligations under which he felt himself, and the importance of the cause in which he had been engaged; and that he hoped, if the Lord should prolong his days, and raise him up again, he should be much more active and diligent than formerly."

At another time he said to his housekeeper, "O, Mary, I have suffered last night what the blessed martys did: my flesh has been, as it were, roasting before a hot fire. But I have nothing to do but to step out of my bed into heaven; I have my foot upon the threshold already."

When parting from his old friend Jeremiah Robertshaw, he said, "The Lord bless you, Jerry: I will pray for you as long as I live; and if there be such a thing as praying in heaven, I will pray for you there also."

In the course of his illness he was visited by Ingham, who gave some particulars of his interviews with the dying saint in a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon. When he first saw him, he said, "My last enemy is come! the signs of death are upon me. But I am not afraid—no! no! blessed be God, my hope is sure, and I am in His hands." In pouring out his soul in prayer, Ingham requested the further prolongation of his life, that more opportunities

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of being useful might be presented to him; and when he had concluded, the sufferer said, "My dear brother Ingham, if the Lord should raise me up, I think I could do more for His glory than I have hitherto done. Alas! what have my wretched services been? And I have now need to cry, at the close of my unprofitable course, God be merciful to me, a sinner!" On his friend's next visit he was much worse, and evidently sinking. It was mentioned to him that a letter had been received from the Countess, and a message it contained was delivered. He was much affected, but after a few moments revived a little. After prayer he said, "I harbour no desire of life: my time is come, and I am entirely resigned to God." Lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he said, "Thy will be done! Tell her Ladyship, that dear elect woman, that I thank her from the bottom of my heart for all her kindness to me during the years I have known her. With my dying breath I implore every blessing, temporal and spiritual, to rest upon her. May the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob bless her; bless her in body, soul, and spirit! I can never repay the spiritual good I have received at her hands. O that she may be eminently useful in her day and generation!" At another time, laying his hand upon his breast, he said, "I am quite exhausted; but I shall soon be at home for ever with the Lord—a poor miserable sinner, redeemed by His blood."

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This was Ingham's last interview with his friend; but, before he had left the house, Venn arrived from Huddersfield, who tells us that "his death-bed was attended with all the Divine consolations which any of his most affectionate friends could have wished him. For, whilst death pointed his javelin to his heart, he beheld the face of this king of terrors as it were the face of an angel. 'Never had I,' said this faithful minister of Christ, 'such a visit from God since I knew Him;' and though greatly oppressed by the feverish sickness, occasioned by the eruption striking in upon his vitals, yet, being asked how he did, he said, 'As happy as I can be on earth, and as sure of glory as if I was in it.'" And again we are told: "His behaviour, throughout his last sickness, was all of a piece with the last twenty years of his life; from the very attack of his fever, he welcomed its approach. His intimate experimental knowledge of Christ abolished all the reluctance nature feels to a dissolution, and he triumphed in Him who is the resurrection and the life."

When it was found that the disease was of so dangerous a type, with his usual kindness he requested that his friends would visit him as little as possible; so that the above fragments are all we can collect in relation to his last hours. Too few to satisfy our wish for instruction from his dying lips; but enough to assure us that as he had lived, so he died. There was no trust in

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anything he had done. All his confidence was in the Divine mercy, through the atonement of Christ, and the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. The truths he had preached with so much power, and laboured so diligently to enforce and extend, were now proved to be of Divine origin, and able to sustain him in the hour of trial; and when the rush of "the nearer waters" was felt, and the last dark wave came with slow and solemn roll, his mind was kept in peace, and his spirit rose triumphant above the threatening billow. On the 7th of April, 1763, the death-knell, echoing mournfully over the mountains, told his people that their hopes were terminated, and that they were not again to listen to the voice which, through imparted power, had brought so many of them to the enjoyment of the grace of God. It was in the twenty-first year of his ministry at Haworth, and the fifty-fifth of his age, that he thus ceased from his work on earth, and obtained the rest of eternity.

The funeral procession moved slowly along the pass that he had often trod, when carrying the glad tidings of the Cross to the numerous places he was accustomed to visit in the vale of Calder. He had directed that his body should be taken to Ewood the day before his burial, which was to take place at Luddenden; and that the number of attendants was to be twenty, "religious or relative friends, or both." He would "have only

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a plain poor man's burial-suit, a plain poor man's coffin, of eller [elder?] boards only, with the words on the cover of it, 'FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST, AND TO DIE IS GAIN.'" There was to be "a plain dinner, consisting only of two dishes, and tarts and cheese." Each attendant was to have "afterwards a pair of black gloves and a burial-cake, and to be twice served with warm negus." All the way to the church suitable verses were to be sung, in various measures and tunes, out of the 23d, 39th, and 91st Psalms, and also various solemn hymns. The directions he had given were faithfully carried out; and his body was interred, as Venn informs us, "with what is more ennobling than all the pomp of solemn dirges or of a royal funeral: for he was followed to the grave by a great multitude who beheld his corpse with affectionate sighs and many tears; who cannot still hear his much-loved name without weeping for the guide of their souls, to whom each of them was dear as children to their father."

One of the attendants, "at least," was to be a Methodist preacher, and he was to preach from the text on his coffin, Phil. i. 21. The service was to commence immediately after dinner, and half-a-guinea was to be given for the sermon. The "Methodist preacher" selected for the occasion was his old friend and fellow-labourer, Henry Venn. The church was too small to contain the immense congregation, and he preached

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in the grave-yard. Tradition says that his voice rose like the swell of a full-toned bell, as he told forth the virtues of his departed friend, and exhorted the people to follow him as he had followed Christ. The deceased had directed that a hymn should be sung after the funeral office and interment, after which all were to return home; and the whole was to be conducted with proper gravity, seriousness, and solemnity.

In some of these directions there is evidently a wish to avoid the evils too commonly attendant upon funerals in this part of the country. The whole day is generally spent over the ceremony, and the Sabbath is chosen whenever possible; in the poorer families a plate is placed upon the table, into which each person attending is expected to cast his death-dole, according to his ability; and after the funeral-service has been read, the clerk announces the name of the public-house at which the arvil will be held.

Not meeter was "the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn," as the last resting-place of "the gentle lover of nature" of whom Walter Scott once sang, than is the vale of Luddenden for the grave of Grimshaw. The present church, a plain neat building, erected in the year 1817, is situated on the alluvial deposit of a deep dell, round three sides of which the stream rushes; and from its loud roar the dean, or valley, receives its name. At times the grave-yard must be overflowed.

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There is wildness on every hand. Primitive customs still linger among its people, a simple race as to their manners, but sharp, shrewd, and soon found to have abundance of mother-wit when drawn into conversation. The whole scene is one that a hermit might have chosen for his residence; as he would here have had shelter, fertile patches for his garden of herbs, solitude, ruggedness, and a clear stream at which to slake his thirst. Grimshaw often ranged on the hills around, as intent upon his great work of saving souls as the faithful shepherd had once been to preserve his flock from the wolves that here prowled in the far-away time. The ecclesiastical status of the place is also in unison with the irregularities of his career as a minister of the Establishment. A chapel was covertly erected here in 1496, for the saying of masses, as the people were often prevented from attending their parish-church at Halifax by floods and tempests. It was never consecrated, and had no legal right of sepulture. In 1624 Archbishop Matthews granted a commission to consecrate it; but, owing to an omission in writing out the mandate, it was consecrated by two priests, without the aid of a bishop. Whitaker thinks it to be an exception, in this respect, to all other places belonging to the Church of England.

The hurry of the stream that nearly encircles the grave-yard seems to tell the visiter of the determination of Grimshaw's spirit in the cause

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of truth, and of his many wanderings to proclaim its power to the neglected masses of his country. His vault is within the church, not far from the pulpit. Near the communion-table is the appropriate text,—"The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." (2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19.)

The next day, being the Sabbath, the funeral sermon was repeated at Haworth; and it was afterwards printed. We shall extract from it all that relates to the character of the deceased.

"The text is proper for the present solemn occasion, when we are assembled to pay our debt of public respect to the memory of the late Reverend Mr. Grimshaw; an occasion on which it is hard to determine, whether we have more cause to lament his removal from our world; or to rejoice, that God was pleased to enrich him with Divine knowledge in so large a measure, to make him so long an eminent instrument in His hand of converting sinners, and to enable him to persevere with an unblemished character till he finished his course with joy." "Few have expressed so great ardency of affection to the service of Christ as your late much-loved pastor. Soon as he knew the grace of God which bringeth salvation, he conferred not with flesh and blood. He never asked, like a double-minded man, what

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the careless, the profane, or self-righteous would say of him, or what they might do to him. The truth of God he stood valiantly in defence of, defying mockery or threats, opposition, and hatred. Ye are all his witnesses, that an unreserved obedience to Christ was the very joy of his heart. When he rose up and when he laid down, going out and coming in, this was his prayer, 'Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?' The brightness of his example in the exercise of Christian tempers proved his prayer was heard, his heart whole with God, and he himself steadfast in his covenant."

"Do you desire to see the meaning of the text exemplified? Review the manner of life, purpose, and doctrine of your late pastor. Can you ever forget with what loving vehemence, with what multiplied proofs from holy writ, he opened to your understanding the nature of Christian salvation; evincing that from the first promise of the Seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, to the consummation of every believer in the bliss of heaven, all is of grace through faith, in opposition to works, and to every kind of dependence upon them *as helping to put away sin?* Can you ever be unmindful of the various lights in which he set before you the wisdom of this constitution, in order that human pride might be abased, and He that built the temple of God, which temple believers in Christ are, might bear all the glory? Are you not still sensible,

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with what enlargement and exultation of heart, as well as with what success, you heard from his lips a display of the *freeness* of Christ's salvation to the very worst of sinners, when their spirits were once wounded within them, of its *riches*, in a present pardon for sin, and power over it, in nearness of access to God, and sweet communion with Him, in the privilege and spirit of adoption, and in all those spiritual blessings in heavenly things which are freely given of God to believers in Christ Jesus, the pledge and earnest of their eternal inheritance. To spread the knowledge of this doctrine, by which alone Christ is honoured, how unwearied was he in labour! Endued with a singular robustness of constitution, he did his utmost for God. Seldom had the sun ever run half his daily course, before this minister had once or oftener declared the testimony of the Lord which enlightens the eyes of the mind, and rejoices the hearts of the poor among the people. All intent on this work, every day in the week had its destined labours of love, morning and evening, to fill up. Labours so great, that it is almost incredible to tell how many hours out of the twenty-four were constantly, for a course of several years, employed by him in instructing those who dwelt in his own parish, or who in neighbouring places attended upon his ministry. Never was there any sordid child of this world more engrossed by the love of money, and more laborious in heaping it up, than your late pastor

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in teaching and preaching the kingdom of God, and the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Amongst real Christians there are different degrees in the joy they feel in the service of Christ, as of glory between the stars of heaven. More of this joy very few possessed than dwelt in your deceased pastor, so justly beloved by you all. His very countenance proclaimed that the joy of the Lord was his strength. Who amongst you ever joined with him in any part of worship, without a proof that his heart was engaged in it with great delight? What were his sermons, but animating persuasives from one who took pleasure in speaking good of his Master's name, as you loved yourselves to leave the husks the swine feed on, to be made happy with the food of angels? Which of you ever received with him the holy communion, without perceiving it was a feast of exquisite joy to his soul? Or on what did he converse with you in your houses, but the immediate great reward of knowing Christ, and living wholly devoted to Him? So that would you have deprived him of his chief delight in life, you must have debarred him from opportunities of using his talents, and spending his strength in proclaiming the goodness of the Lord."

"No one, I am persuaded, who has heard me this day, no one that knew your late minister, but must confess they saw in him that joy in the

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service of Christ which emboldened him to bear every cross which flesh and blood abhors. Witness, ye moors and mountains, how often he was in perils by the way, whilst carrying the glad tidings of salvation to some company of poor cottagers, who but for his painful instructions, had died as ignorant of Christ as they were born! Witness, ye stormy rains, and piercing colds of winter, ye fainting sultry heats of summer, how many seasons he exposed himself to your greatest inclemencies, if by any means he might save some. In this work, no roads were too dangerous, no refreshment too coarse, no lodging too hard, no discouragement too great. His work was wages of itself, as much as he desired; and influenced by the mercies of his redeeming God, he with joy presented his health, and strength, and life, a sacrifice to Him, which was his reasonable service."

"Who amongst the Christians in our time was more deeply affected with the self-abasing doctrine of the text than your late minister? It was engraven upon his heart, and not all his diligence in doing the work of his ministry, nor his great success in it, not all his joys in God, though abundant, nor his unblameable conversation, nor the great veneration of his character, which his friends and people could not but testify often before him, ever led him to obscure the glory of the cross of Christ. Still upon His atoning blood and justifying righteousness alone, did every hope

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of his soul's acceptance with God depend. Hence, he was used to say, when he came to die, this was the view he hoped he should have both of himself, and his Redeemer; viz., That he should see himself more undeserving and more a sinner, than he had ever before, and Christ more admirable in the riches of His grace, in receiving such a one to mercy. Hence, he would sometimes intreat God not to deny a blessing to his preaching, though he confessed himself, undoubtedly, one of the vilest creatures on the face of the earth. No one that knew Mr. Grimshaw can possibly suspect this was any affected strain of humility, or any other than the estimation he made of himself."

Romaine preached at St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, London, from the same text. We are not aware that his sermon was published, but the following paragraph was taken down at the time by one of his hearers:—"Mr. Grimshaw was one of the most laborious and indefatigable ministers of Christ that I ever knew. For the good of souls he rejected all hopes of affluent fortune, and for the love of Christ cheerfully undertook difficulties, dangers, and tribulations. He preached Christ, and Christ alone; and God gave him very numerous seals to his ministry. Himself hath told me, that not fewer than twelve hundred were in communion with him; most of whom, in the judgment of charity, he could not but believe to

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be one with Christ. When some of his friends, in tenderness to his health, would press him to spare himself sometimes, he would answer, 'Let me labour now: I shall have rest enough by and by. I cannot do enough for Christ, who has done so much for me.' He was the most humble walker with God I ever met with; insomuch that he could never bear to hear any commendations made to him on his usefulness, or anything which belonged to him. His last words were, '*Here goes an unprofitable servant.*'"

Writing on the 18th of June, Charles Wesley says: "Last Wednesday night I was two hours speaking of blessed Mr. Grimshaw. The chapel was crowded with attentive hearers."

At the time of his death, Grimshaw was a widower. His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Cockcroft, gent., of Mayroyd, near Hebden-Bridge. On his death-bed he was visited by his son John, who was careless and intemperate, and had been the cause of great grief. His father told him to take care that he did not come into the same circumstances, as he was not fit to die. It was to him he said, that his body was like a boiling vessel, but his soul was as happy as it could be made by God. John died at Ewood on the 17th of May, 1766. There was hope in his death. Even in his wildest days, there were moments of seriousness and thought. He would say to the horse he rode, which had

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formerly belonged to his father, "Once thou didst carry a saint, but now thou carriest a devil." The Spirit of the Lord strove powerfully with him; he was first led to repentance, and was then enabled to cast himself upon the mercy of Christ; and, a little time before his departure, he was heard to exclaim, "What will my father say, when he sees I have got to heaven!" His mother had been married three times, and it was the lot of his relict to be married three times also. By birth Grace Gibson, of Bridge Royd, she had for her second husband Samuel Sutcliffe, gent., of Hoo Hoyle, near Mytholmroyd. This place is called by Wesley "a lovely valley encompassed by high mountains." In June, 1770, he stood upon the smooth grass of the gently-rising ground before the house, with the people on the slope before him; and it was "a glorious opportunity." Her third husband was the Rev. John Crosse, A.M., the exemplary vicar of Bradford, whom the writer heard preach in his parish-church, after he had become totally blind, at the celebration of the peace of 1814. The prayers were read by a relative of his own, the Rev. Charles Hardy; the congregation was immense; and the vicar preached with great power.

There are a few further incidents in the history of Haworth, too interesting in their character to be passed by without notice. Since the death of Grimshaw, there have been only three incum-

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bents; John Richardson, John James Charnock, and Patrick Brontë. They have all been regarded as evangelical in their principles, and as having preached the truth; but they were not, like their predecessor, sons of thunder or evangelists of the wilderness. Mary Newton, who died at Keighley in 1841, attended the church at Haworth in early life. She frequently remained at the time of the administration of the Lord's Supper, not as a communicant, but in order that she might be able to return home in the company of her parents. She was frequently affected with what she saw and heard, especially on one occasion, when Richardson gave out the verse,—

> "Blood hath a voice to pierce the skies;
> 'Revenge!' the blood of Abel cries:
> But the dear streams, when Christ was slain,
> Speak peace as loud from every vein."

In the month of June, 1767, Lady Huntingdon, being at the time on a visit to the vicar of Huddersfield, made an excursion thence to Haworth, accompanied by Townend and the apostolic Fletcher. As their arrival was expected, an immense assemblage had collected from all parts. The use of Whitefield's pulpit was requested; but Richardson was not favourable to the practice of out-door preaching, and it was refused, though strong efforts were made to gain possession of it. As the people could not be sent away disappointed, they were addressed by both

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the strangers in the church-yard, the vicar of Madeley taking the first service.

The visits of Wesley to Haworth were continued until within three years of his death. On the 3d of August, 1766, he preached from "a little scaffold on the south-side of the church," on the words, "If thou hadst known . . . . the things that belong unto thy peace!" The communicants alone filled the church; and in the afternoon the congregation was supposed to be the largest that had ever assembled on this hallowed spot. On his next visit, July 1, 1770, he says: "Being much concerned for the poor parishioners of Haworth, who hear and hear and are no more affected than stones, I spoke to them in the most cutting manner I could." There was again an immense assemblage on the 5th of July, 1772. On the 24th of April, 1774, the church contained the congregation, as the day was cold and stormy. He again spoke strongly on the 28th of April, 1776, to the parishioners,—"few of whom are even awakened to this day." Thousands upon thousands were gathered together on the 18th of April, 1779. The use of the church was refused him on his next visit, in 1780; but we find him again in the church on the 23d of April, 1786, and on the 27th of April, 1788. The grandfather of the Rev. J. P. Lockwood, who heard him on this occasion, was accustomed to describe the scene he then witnessed with much vividness. The windows of the church

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were partially removed, and Wesley addressed the listening multitudes from the scaffold. He was accompanied by Joseph Bradford, afterwards twice president of the Conference, who had the leading thoughts of his discourse written on slips of paper; and when he found the memory of the venerable preacher at fault, he put before him the slip containing the thought he intended to express, which was at once taken up, and the discourse continued in its appointed order. This is illustrative of the logical character of Wesley's mind: the higher faculty was still there, though the memory was gone. Most old men, under such circumstances, would have been contented with falling back upon personal experience, or would have resorted to random exhortation. A Gothic ruin may become a mere heap of stones; but even in the fragments of a classic temple there is still grace.

After the death of Grimshaw, the chapel he had erected in 1758 was allowed to go to decay. It was propped up to keep it from becoming an absolute ruin; but the voice of praise was no longer re-echoed by its mouldering walls, and the services were held at the house of Abraham Sharpe. The Society had dwindled down to eight members. In 1789 it was thought, by the preachers of the Keighley circuit, that it would be a lasting reproach if some effort were not made to restore the waste places of their former Zion.

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Jonathan Maskew, now seventy-six years of age, was the only surviving trustee; but, on his consent being asked, he was willing to convey the premises to a new trust. A subscription was forthwith commenced, and, the appeal being readily responded to, the old place resumed its sacred character, as to its upper story, whilst the lower part was converted into a cottage. When a revival of the work of God took place soon afterwards, the upper room was insufficient to contain the congregation, and the whole of the building was occupied for worship.*

There is now at Haworth an elegant Wesleyan chapel, near the site of the old one. It was opened by the Rev. Robert Newton, D.D., in 1846, and is capable of seating eight hundred persons. Connected with it there is a substantial school-room, in which two hundred and sixty-five children are at present taught, with a Sabbath-school, in which there are three hundred and twenty scholars. Haworth is the residence of a Wesleyan minister, who has six hundred members of Society, or communicants, under his care, in this place and the adjacent hamlets. The schoolmaster resides in the house built by Grimshaw for the preacher's dwelling; in its height, exposure, and present isolation, resembling a light-house, and requiring some courage to remain in it during a night of storm. In the wall

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine for 1829, p. 32.

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of the present chapel there is inserted a stone from the old sanctuary, with the inscription, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." And another stone, from the same erection, placed over the window of the vestry, records,—"The first chapel was erected by William Grimshaw, A.B., Minister of Haworth church, A.D. 1758." The inscription was originally, "This chapel, &c.;" and, on placing the stone in the position it now occupies, the trustees altered it to its present form.

The church retains much of the appearance it presented when the voice of Grimshaw was last heard within its walls. It looks like a respectable old meeting-house, with a tower attached to it, and has been called "commonplace, neither old enough nor modern enough to compel notice." It was enlarged, and almost entirely rebuilt, in 1755. The present nave and the north aisle belonged to the former erection. The greatness of the crowds attending the wondrous ministry here, rendered it necessary that further accommodation should be provided. Two of the old windows were used in the new wall, and another window added, of more modern design. Upon entering the church, at the left-hand side, the stone is built up in the wall, bearing the inscription referred to at page 28,—"This steeple and the little bell were made in the year of our Lord 600." On the south side there is a curious

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sun-dial, with a more trustworthy inscription: "Mr. Richard Pollard, of Stanbury, gave it to this church, 1726." The interior contains many memorials of its most honoured incumbent. Appropriate inscriptions, in various parts, remind the worshippers of their duty. Under the sounding-board of the pulpit, in gilt letters, there is the sentence, "I determined not to know anything save Christ and Him crucified." His favourite text, "For me to live is Christ," appears on the pulpit, on the brass chandelier at its front, and on a tablet with the names of the church-officers. On the baptismal font is the sentence, "I indeed baptize with water, but He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost." There are two pewter flagons kept in an ancient chest, the lid of which forms the communion-table. On one is the verse,—

> "Blest Jesus! what delicious fare,
> How sweet Thine entertainments are!
> Never did angels taste above
> Redeeming grace and dying love."

On the other flagon is a similar stanza:—

> "In Jesus we live, in Jesus we rest,
> And thankful receive His dying bequest;
> The cup of salvation His mercy bestows,
> And all from His passion our happiness flows."

There are no marble monuments to tell of wealthy families resident in the neighbourhood; but on the right-hand side of the communion-table is a mural tablet, erected to the memory of the Brontës.

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For many years to come, the admirers of genius will visit this tomb, and lament the early death of its tenants. Few families with which we are acquainted by story are invested with greater interest than that of the Brontës. We have the father, an ardent and intelligent Irishman, who had seen the eagle strike its talons into the scared lamb near his own parsonage; the mother, of a respectable Methodist family from Cornwall,* a frail flower transplanted to a bleak abode, on her drooping and death succeeded in the management of the house by a maiden sister; the only son, one of the most wilful and misguided beings that ever walked the earth; the daughters, amusing themselves with writing long and numerous works on politics and politicians, whilst yet in the dress of childhood; Tabby, an old servant, who knew folk that had seen the fairies:—there is something about the whole group so strange, so solemn, so unlike the riot and rompings of the homes of England where children are found, that, if name and locality had not been given, we should conclude that the account was the product of some wild imagina-

* We learn from "The Life of Jabez Bunting, D.D.," by his Son, that Miss Branwell, at the time of her marriage to Mr. Brontë, was living with her uncle, Mr. Fennell, who was then the house-governor, and one of the tutors, of the school at Woodhouse-Grove, near Bradford, for the sons of Wesleyan ministers. Among the books she took with her as part of her dowry were some from the early Methodist press that would be read with much zest and avidity by her children.

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tion. To estimate the character of the sisters, we must not judge them by the common laws of social usage, or we shall do them wrong. They were ignorant of the world's ways; and the world sometimes thought they partook of its evil, when they would have shrunk with horror from the conclusions drawn from their words. From the ravings of their brother they learnt the mad deeds of sin; and from Tabby they heard tales of the halls on the hills that gave them an insight into the manners of the old families on their native moors. There was deep affection in their hearts, which burst forth in grandeur when the ground was arid and the wayfarer athirst; but it did not bubble up in continual ripple, so that whoever came, or at whatever time, might drink of the stream and be refreshed. Towards strangers they were reserved and distant. But they were all remarkable for their love of home. This kept Branwell from being a restless sailor-boy, or perhaps a freebooter; the determined Emily, who would have faced a lion without fear, pined away when absent from the parsonage; and Charlotte, whilst residing at Brussels, after outlining a home-scene with great power and expressiveness, says to her sister,—"How divine are these recollections to me at this moment! I pray with my heart and soul that all may continue well at Haworth; above all, in one grey half-inhabited house. God bless the walls thereof! Safety, health, happiness, and pros-

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perity to you, papa, and Tabby!" In every one of her letters there is some kind word about her venerable father, who still lives in that silent dwelling, the picture of a fine old man; hoary and roseate as the mountain-snow when crimsoned by the setting sun.

It is an instructive lesson for the romantic young lady, who dreams only of poets and gallant knights, and thinks all household work a drudgery, to find Charlotte, though conscious of her mental power, baking, and ironing shirts, and saying, "I am much happier black-leading stoves, making the beds, and sweeping the floors at home, than I should be living like a fine lady anywhere else." When it was proposed to send away Tabby, who had broken her leg, and would require much nursing, the girls "struck eating," till she was allowed to remain, and they then watched her as a sister. Nevertheless, from their own defiant spirit, and the untoward character of the circumstances in which they had been placed, the tendency of their works is not genial, nor their character healthy. There are gleams of sunshine in the scenes they present, but they are few, and sometimes lurid; and we more frequently meet with the scathed rock and winter torrent, than with the peaceful valley or the still waters. Yet, in the mind of Charlotte, there were yearnings after a higher state. "I know the treasures of the Bible, and I love and adore them. I can *see* the well of life, in all its

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clearness and brightness; but when I stoop down to drink of the pure waters, they fly from my lips as if I were Tantalus." "I do wish to be better than I am. I pray fervently sometimes to be made so. I have stings of conscience, visitings of remorse, glimpses of holy—of inexpressible things, which formerly I used to be a stranger to. It may all die away, and I may be in utter midnight; but I implore a merciful Redeemer, that if this be the dawn of the Gospel it may brighten to perfect day." "If I could always live with you," she writes to a friend, "and daily read the Bible with you,—if your lips and mine could at the same time drink the same draught from the same pure fountain of mercy,—I hope, I trust, I might one day become better, far better than my evil, wandering thoughts, my corrupt heart, cold to the spirit, and warm to the flesh, will now permit me to be. I often plan the pleasant life which we might lead together, strengthening each other in that power of self-denial, that hallowed and glowing devotion, which the first saints of God often attained to. My eyes fill with tears when I contrast the bliss of such a state, brightened by hopes of the future, with the melancholy state I now live in."* Extracts of a similar kind might be multiplied, and in reading them we feel an interest beyond that which her most popular works inspire. The story of her last days, when

* Mrs. Gaskell's "Life of Charlotte Brontë."

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she was in rapid succession a fair bride, a mother, and pallid clay, has not been told by her biographer; perhaps it was not revealed to her. It would otherwise have been consolatory to know that before her departure the Day-Star had arisen, and that she was guided triumphantly, by light from the cross, to the city of peace.

The house in which Grimshaw lived and died is about half a mile distant from the church. Somewhat low, and with nothing attractive in its general appearance, it is a much humbler dwelling than the parsonage inhabited by the Brontës. Its situation is about midway between the stream that courses along the bottom of the ravine, and the ridge of the moor. It commands an extensive view of the valley, and also of the uneven and romantic scenery towards Keighley. Like most of the buildings in this locality, it is built of stone from the adjacent quarry. There is a porch in front of the main entrance, over which is a small window that once lighted the incumbent's study; and an old door gives it an antiquated character. These remain unaltered. The door is of dark oak, massive, its hinges much worn with years of use; and, as it is thickly studded with large nails, the visiter is reminded of the entrance to a prison. Altogether, its aspect is cheerless; but it had one advantage, in being away from the noxious influences of the thronged churchyard. It is now divided into

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three portions, consisting of a farm-house and two cottages. It has been altered and modernized since Grimshaw's day, and the original structure is seen only in the porch, door, window, and walls. Were these walls gifted with speech, they might tell of the whilom presence of demon spirits and of angels radiant, of mighty wrestlings, of the sighs and tears of sad sinners pleading for mercy, of holy advices given in the Divine name to the earnest aspirant after the perfection of Christian privilege, and of visions of glory, when their saintly occupant was permitted to worship before the unveiled throne, and anticipate the fruition of eternity.

The estimation in which Grimshaw was held by his contemporaries may be learnt from the number of Elegies written on the occasion of his death, either illustrative of his character, or expressive of the loss that the Church sustained by his removal. Several of these we have seen, roughly printed at the local press on broad-sheets. Two Hymns were written at the same time by Charles Wesley, one of which we insert:—

"Thanks be to God, whose truth and power
And faithful mercies never end;
Who brings us through the mortal hour,
And bids our spotless souls ascend!

"Thanks be to God, the God of love,
The Giver of all-conquering grace,
Who calls our friend to joys above,
And shows him there His open face.

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"The God whom here his faith beheld,
The Father's fulness in the Son,
He sees, in glorious light reveal'd,
And shouts, and falls before the throne.

"We, Saviour, at Thy footstool lie,
Thy creatures purchased by Thy blood,
And, 'Holy, holy, holy,' cry,
In honour of the Triune God;

"With angels and archangels join,
With all the ransom'd sons of grace,
Extol the Majesty Divine,
And breathe unutterable praise.

"We praise Thy constancy of love,
Which kept its favourite to the end;
Which soon shall all our souls remove,
Who trust in our eternal Friend.

"To us, who in Thy blood believe,
The world, the fiend, and sin tread down,
Thou wilt the final victory give,
And then the bright triumphant crown."*

At his death Grimshaw left certain papers, in which some of the events of his life are recorded; but to what extent they were carried we have been unable to learn. They were seen by Venn, who gives one extract from them relating to his conversion. We are indebted to John Newton for the greater part of the information we possess in relation to his character. The "Letters" he published were written thirty-five years after his friend's decease, at the instance of the Rev. Henry Foster, to whom they are addressed,

* Charles Wesley's Journal, by Thomas Jackson.

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and who himself collected a considerable number of the facts, and is represented as being well acquainted with Haworth. Newton enjoyed the friendship of Grimshaw about five years, and his personal recollections were aided by the Rev. James Charnock, the then incumbent, who had furnished "the principal and most authentic memoirs." By William Myles, a Wesleyan minister of great simplicity and saintliness of character, many additional particulars were gleaned, illustrative of his early connexion with the Methodists. In the "Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley," by the venerable tutor of the Wesleyan Theological Institution at Richmond, one of the most interesting and important works yet published in illustration of the history of Methodism, there are further contributions on the same subject, of great value. Little is now to be gleaned from local tradition, nearly a hundred years having passed away since his departure was mourned by his people, and almost all that can be relied on, in the memories of the aged men and women now living upon these hills, is a repetition of facts that have already appeared in print. *

* "Christ the Joy of the Christian's Life, and Death his Gain. The Substance of a Sermon preached April 10th, [1763,] in Haworth Church, on the Death of the Rev. William Grimshaw, A.B., Minister of that Parish, and published at the Request of his Friends. To which is added, a Sketch of his Life and Ministry. By H. Venn, A.M., Vicar of Hud-

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But enough has been recorded to warrant another attempt at rescuing the story of Grimshaw's life from the stream that carries into oblivion, as far as earth is concerned, so many names once famous in the church and the world. It is alone in many of its phases; and in times to come it will have prominence in the dissertations to be written on the establishment of Methodism. There is a wide and essential difference between the religious characteristics of the present age, and those of the period in which Grimshaw lived. There are now no clergymen like White, nor any mobs like those that

dersfield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire." Pp. 36. Leeds: G. Wright, 1763.

"Memoirs of the Life of the late Rev. William Grimshaw, A.B., Minister of Haworth, in the West Riding of the County of York; with Occasional Reflections. By John Newton, Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth. In Six Letters to the Rev. Henry Foster, Minister of St. James's, Clerkenwell."

"The Life and Writings of the late Rev. William Grimshaw, A.B., Minister of Haworth, in the West Riding of the County of York. By William Myles." London: 1813.

"The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A., sometime Student of Christ-Church, Oxford: comprising a Review of his Poetry; Sketches of the Rise and Progress of Methodism, with Notices of Contemporary Events and Characters. By Thomas Jackson." 2 vols., 8vo. London: Mason, 1841.

The Author would also gratefully acknowledge his obligation to the Rev. R. Woodfin, Wesleyan minister, of Haworth, for the communication of several facts inserted in the description given of the parsonage, chapel, and church, at Haworth.

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gathered together at his instigation. In multitudes of the churches throughout our land the voice of the instructer is in accordance with the earlier ministrations of the Establishment: with some unhappy exceptions, saving truth is proclaimed to our Nonconforming congregations; and there is scarcely a single village in any of the manufacturing districts around Haworth, in which evangelical instruction may not be received. Yet, without in any way undervaluing the good that has emanated from the two Baptist chapels in the village, and from the old church on the hill, under the ministry of its successive incumbents,—and remembering, too, that other churches have been recently erected in the immediate neighbourhood,—we have still many evidences that the power and all-pervasive influence of Methodism are as much needed as ever in this locality; and we cannot doubt that, so long as its agents are faithful to their high commission, their labours will continue to be owned of God. But the facts upon which these conclusions are based belong to another department of investigation.

The zeal of Grimshaw was like the glare of the meteor, as it passes rapidly through the sky, startling the nations; but, in its continuance and beneficial results, it resembled rather the lightning-flash of the tropical monsoon, which bursts with one unbroken series of crashes upon hamlet and headland, until it has cleared the

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atmosphere from all noxious elements, and then leaves behind it, when its noise and tumult have passed away, the glad earth radiant, as with a sea of light, the purity of which is felt by the entire man as he breathes it, body and soul. We want a similar power to be possessed and exercised by the whole church throughout the world. Why should not every minister be a Grimshaw, in earnestness; and every village a Haworth, in privilege? We work for God too much as if the souls under our care were not in mortal peril; or as if there were no bright promises of Divine assistance on which we may rely, and no prospect of glorious reward to animate us in the performance of our important duties. It seemed to be a proud moment for the eastern monarch, when he looked abroad upon stately palace, and gilded pinnacle, and lofty tower, and said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?" It was a sight impressive when Wellington rode over the then luxuriant plain of Waterloo, and pointed out to his attendant relative the spots where the conflict had been the most furious and the carnage the most fatal. But in the great day, when God "shall reward every man according to his works," when crowns shall be distributed, and the wreath placed upon the victor's brow, the richest and most valued recompense will be given to him who has been most in earnest to save the world from misery and sin, and done boldest battle against the enemies of the soul of man. This

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honour has William Grimshaw. Not long before his death he stood with Newton upon a hill near Haworth, surveying the romantic prospect; when he said, that, at the time he first came into that part of the country, he might have gone half a day's journey on horseback, toward the east, west, north, and south, without meeting a truly serious person, or even hearing of one; but that then, through the blessing of God upon his labours, he could tell of several hundreds of persons who attended his ministry, or were devout communicants with him at the Lord's table; and of nearly all the last-named he could say, that he was as well acquainted with their several temptations, trials, and exercises, both personal and domestic, as if he had lived in their families. After listening to such a declaration from one whose whole life proclaimed its truthfulness, how soul-stirring the voice of the apocalyptic vision,—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM!" (Rev. xiv. 13.)

London: R. Needham, Printer, Paternoster-Row.

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